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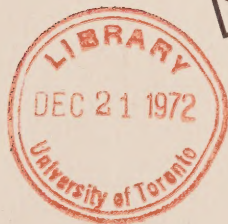
THE
FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL
STUDY GROUP
ON ALIENATION

[No. 2]

A laboratory exploration of the worker - client relationship in the welfare system - Manitoba

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OPERATION EXAMEN;

A Laboratory Exploration of the
Worker-Client Relationship in the
Welfare System - Manitoba

Presented to
The Department of Health and Social Services
Province of Manitoba

and

The Federal Provincial Study Group on Alienation

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Summary

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The following is a summary of the findings of the study...

The study was conducted in the field of psychology and...

SUMMARY

The study was conducted in the field of psychology and...

The study was conducted in the field of psychology and...

The study was conducted in the field of psychology and...

The study was conducted in the field of psychology and...

Conclusion

The study was conducted in the field of psychology and...

The study was conducted in the field of psychology and...



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SUMMARY

Method

The participants in our study included 12 welfare recipients, 12 social workers and 12 senior officials.

The sessions consisted of meetings and laboratory exercises scheduled between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. and were spread over an eight-week period from April 14 to June 1, 1970

Twelve administrators participated in the first and last sessions.

Emphasis was on having the participants experience different ways of relating in terms of immediate impact and long-range effects. The following exercises and activities were included:

Communication Game	Building a Model of the
T-Groups	Group
Feedback Exercises	Virginia Satire Communi-
Confrontation Procedures	cation Exercises
Strength Bombardment	Video Taping of Symbolic
Intergroup Fishbowl	Interaction
Personal Observation	
Exercise	

Evaluation

According to comments made by participants, several weeks after the group sessions were concluded the experience had been rewarding. They endorsed the method and would be willing to participate in similar programs in the future. From examples given, there appeared to be significant changes in the way some participants related to other people which could be directly related to their experience in the experiment.

The major drawbacks emphasized by participants was a limited selection of subjects (most were deserted wives).

The administration should be involved throughout the whole project and there should be involved a wider scope of clients from different situations. Some participants felt that the sessions were spread out over too long a time period.

Impressions

The impressions of one recipient represented a vivid picture of the encounter sessions and have been included in unedited form in this report.

Findings

Important themes emerged concerning the complex problems of the welfare system.

In general, 73% of all participants agree that the roots of the problem lie in community attitudes towards people on welfare.

For 50% of recipients, the basic problem area in the system lies between the social workers and the administration. While the community attitudes may change over a long period of time, the immediate opportunities for revising the system appear to lie within the scope of better administrative practice. The present welfare system does not lessen the society-client conflict by providing a more truly personal service for clients. The recipients clearly want abolition of restricting roles, rules and formality which sets up barriers between workers and recipients.

For the recipients, the general value system of the society and the competitive social attitude are their greatest sources of alienation.

Other major alienating factors appear to be the motivational and attitudinal effects of getting "ground-down" by the welfare system's procedures and policies.

The social worker finds himself at a pressure spot in the system. He is trapped between the official responsibilities of the welfare system and their human responsibilities to the recipients. Probably the most important factor in this contradiction of responsibilities arises because of the social worker's performance of two functions -- that of money given and counsellor. The majority of participants were in favour of dividing these functions.

One of the surprising outcomes of the study is that while we assumed that clients felt alienated from society by virtue of their role as welfare recipients, we found worker's feelings of alienation from the administration were strong. The communication in the Department is mainly downward with little opportunity for horizontal contact. The process of decision making tends to be authoritarian rather than consultative.

The most common recommendation of participants was that open communication from top to bottom be initiated. The very important feature of the seminar was that it demonstrated how concrete steps could be taken to open up this two-way flow of communication.

In view of the participants, it would be useful to develop more human relations skills in the staff, to involve the recipient advisory group in the system and to embark on a program of community education about the service of the Welfare Department and the people receiving the services.

The group sessions decreased the workers and recipients feelings of alienation. A positive and active approach to solving welfare system problems, will reduce powerlessness, meaninglessness and purposelessness. This approach can solve the basic problem of alienation.

BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

This study was carried out as one of many studies which have been commissioned by the Task Force on Alienation of the National Department of Health and Welfare. A composite report summarizing the general trends in all studies will be presented in September, 1970 to the Task Force.

In particular, our group was asked to conduct the study reported here in Manitoba, along with a similar study in British Columbia. The major distinction between the two investigations was that the study in Manitoba was spread over an eight-week period with participation for one half day each week, while the study in British Columbia occurred over a four-day period with the participants living in.

If the reader is interested in comparing these two approaches, we suggest looking at the report which we presented to the British Columbia Department of Social Welfare and the Task Force on Alienation of the National Department of Health and Welfare, which summarizes the results in that province.

We are particularly indebted to Mr. Freeman H. Compton, Director, Programme Consultation Services, Social Services Division, whose courage, in suggesting that this type of action research be inaugurated, made these studies possible not only in Manitoba but in other parts of Canada. I hope that his support of our ideas has been justified in the following pages.

I would also like to thank Mr. Bill Bell, Staff Development Consultant, Social Services Division, Department of Health and Social Services, who worked closely with us throughout the entire conduct of the fieldwork and also advised us on the implications of the findings. In addition, I would like to thank Mr. Rene Toupin, Minister and Mr. Walter Boyd, Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Health and Social Services.

Both of these gentlemen took time from busy schedules to appear during the sessions. They not only gave important moral support to this innovative study but were prepared to give their ideas and commitment to a review of the results when new programs are forged for the Department in Manitoba.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Donald Arnott who gave careful and patient attention to many details. His aggressive efforts to locate as many of the participants as possible for the follow-up interviews contributed a great deal to making this report possible. I would also like to mention Mrs. Darlene Germscheid whose contribution in Chapter IV of this report can be assessed by the reader. We are proud to have her as a contributor.

OBJECTIVES

CHAPTER I

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were:

1. To demonstrate a process by which welfare recipients and administrators can work together to solve problems arising from the dispensation of welfare.
2. To investigate the problems facing welfare officers and recipients in the dispensation of public welfare and their possible solutions.
3. To explore methods by which the relationship between the welfare recipient and the welfare worker can be utilized to mobilize the resources of the recipient so that he can better cope with his life situation.

METHOD

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Selection of Subjects

Three to four names of recipients and workers were submitted by each of the offices throughout the Province of Manitoba and we were able to make selections from these names based on the age, background and interest of the workers and recipients. Due to the lack of availability of some social workers and recipients, it was not possible to select candidates at random in many cases. All recipients and all workers who were approached agreed to attend. The result was, 12 welfare recipients and 12 workers took part in the study.

In total it seemed there was a good cross-section of social workers but the recipients were almost exclusively drawn from one group - that is, deserted wives with dependent children. One male recipient was sent as an alternate but when he saw that all other recipients were female, he decided to withdraw. Therefore, the recipients were all female and generally either widowed or deserted with dependent children.

The Department was also asked to select 12 senior welfare officials, including if possible the Deputy Minister or Minister. These officials were selected by Mr. Freeman Compton and the Assistant Deputy Minister. The Assistant Deputy Minister opened the session and there was good participation by the senior levels in the Department in the four hours at the beginning as well as the four hours at the end of our consultation procedures. On the final morning of the procedures, the Minister and some of his aids, at the request of members of the recipient welfare group taking part in this study, attended for approximately one hour. The minister was able to enter into a free discussion and apologized for not being able to devote more time to participation in the study.

The recipients were paid an hourly rate to attend the sessions and the Manitoba Department of Health and Social Services covered additional costs such as baby-sitting, transportation and other out-of-pocket expenses. Workers who sometimes came from as far away as The Pas and Thompson were flown in weekly at the Department's expense.

Procedure

The design for this project was essentially based on a frank sharing of experiences within a confrontation format between client and welfare worker. Various laboratory exercises and activities were carried out involving pairs, groups and individuals. A detailed description of the program is given in the next section.

Eight weekly sessions, scheduled between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., were conducted with 12 welfare workers and 12 welfare recipients. Twelve administrators participated in the first and last sessions.

Response to the weekly meetings was reflected in 98% attendance by recipients and workers. Incidents such as recipients travelling through a blizzard and having to leave home at 6:00 o'clock in the morning gave indications of unusual enthusiasm.

Recipients were paid to attend each session from project funds. The Department also assisted them by helping to find transportation and baby sitting facilities where needed.

Dr. David Jackson was in charge of, and attended all sessions. Dr. John Croft met with Dr. Jackson in Toronto at regular intervals to plan and revise the schedules. Mr. Bill Bell, Staff Development Consultant, Social Services Division, Department of Health and Social Services, acted as co-trainer.

Another coordinator, Donald Arnott of David Jackson and Associates Limited, made all arrangements, attended all sessions and conducted follow up interviews.

These interviews were conducted three to five weeks after the sessions were completed. Their objectives were to obtain participants' reactions to the effect these laboratory sessions had on them personally as administrators, workers or recipients, and to gain further insight about how they felt the welfare system alienated recipients. Because the follow up interviews were conducted during the vacation period, and because some workers lived several hundred miles from Winnipeg, it was possible to complete follow up interviews with all 12 recipients, but only nine social workers and eight administrators.

LABORATORY TIMETABLE

Alienation Confrontation Winnipeg, Manitoba

DAY (1)¹- April 14, 1970

- 8:30 - 8:45 Housekeeping and Introduction of Government officials.
- 8:45 - 8:55 Message from Government official giving the background for the Conference on Alienation and describing how the Department supported the research activities and saw them as extremely innovative.
- 8:55 - 9:25 Introduction by David Jackson outlining the basic principles for the forthcoming eight days' activities, including such things as openness, confrontation with caring, trust and the relaxation of previous roles. Also, discussion of how this conference was conceived and why it took a form which was unusual for most research projects -- that is, action research.

Nine issues --

- 1) Act critique, content and process, then act again.
- 2) Decision-making by people with the most information -- in other words, the people at the position in the organization where most of the information is available should make the decision.
- 3) Confrontation with caring; be open and direct.
- 4) Experience it in the 'here and now', not outside these four walls.
- 5) People are equal when working on a problem and therefore reduce any pre-conceived status differences.
- 6) Experience it; don't describe it.
- 7) Use each other as people, not roles.
- 8) Reduce inappropriate competition.
- 9) Strive for open communication and trust.

¹ This general format is from Beckhard, R. "The Confrontation Meeting", Harvard Business Review, March-April, 1967, 45, No. 2

Day (1) - cont'd.

- 9:25 - 10:25 Identification of problems in six-person homogeneous groupings - two groups each of administrators, social workers and recipients. After selecting a reporter, each group defined the major problems which they thought caused alienation in the welfare system.
- 10:25 - 10:55 All participants formed a large circle and each reporter gave the group a summary of his group's definition of the problems. The points were all noted on flip chart paper and pasted on the wall in front of the group.
- 10:55 - 11:55 They broke down into their six-person homogeneous groups to choose the three most important problems listed on the flip chart and to develop solutions to these problems. They were also asked how they thought the problems and their solutions could be communicated to the person or persons responsible for a solution.
- 11:55 - 12:20 Each group reported back to all participants.
- 12:20 - 12:30 David Jackson reviewed the activities of the morning and encouraged the social workers and recipients to continue to work on the project in the coming weeks.
- 12:30 - 12:40 The Assistant Deputy Minister closed the session by saying he was encouraged and interested. The Department would be following the experiment with interest, he said.

DAY (2) - April 20, 1970

(Social Workers and Recipients were the only ones present for the next 6 sessions)

- 9:30 - 10:30 Participants were asked to fill out a form ranking in importance the 49 problems or issues isolated the previous week.

DAY (2) - cont'd.

- 10:30 - 11:15 Two homogeneous 12-person groups of social workers and recipients were asked to discuss their personal ranking and to isolate the top 10 problems. They were asked to achieve consensus on the issues and the order of ranking.
- 11:15 - 11:45 Each member of the 12-person groups was asked to report to his particular group how he felt when they were trying to achieve consensus. Each was asked to report "what was going on". This was done in a round robin fashion.
- 11:45 - 12:00 Participants, in homogeneous pairs, interviewed each other with a view to introducing each other to the group. After each pair had introduced the other person, the group was asked to circulate in an informal fashion and choose a partner so that each worker was paired with a recipient.
- 12:00 - 12:30 Social workers went to the centre of the fishbowl, with the recipients outside observing. The social workers were asked to discuss what went on in their groups when they were trying to arrive at a consensus earlier in the morning. The recipients were instructed to watch their pair member.
- 12:10 - 12:40 Pairs were asked to meet, and the observer was instructed to give feedback to the social worker on his behaviour in the group session.
- 12:40 - 1:10 Social worker/Recipient pairs met, and this time the social workers reported to the recipients their observations about the recipients' behaviour.
- 1:20 - 1:30 David Jackson gave a summary and some general reactions to the new mode, with only the social workers and recipients in the group session. Each member was given a copy of "How Others See You", and instructed to fill it out with the help of some other person during the succeeding week.

DAY (3) - April 27, 1970

9:30 - 11:30 The members, in two 12-person heterogeneous groups, were given the following task:

- . "This is what I need to improve upon, and why."

Each person was to speak on this topic for three minutes in a round robin fashion.

- . People fed back to him "on the basis of how I have seen you", their reactions for five minutes.

Thus the person would speak for three minutes about himself; then other people in the group would take the next five minutes to react to that and add other information.

11:30 - 12:00 Videotaping in pairs. Each pair was asked to go to an isolated area of the room where the instructions were pasted on the wall. These instructions asked the persons, one at a time, to put their partner down on the floor and then help him up; the roles were then reversed so that the person who had been put down, put the other person down. It was up to the members of the group to decide who would go first and how they would go about doing this. Each of the episodes was videotaped.

12:00 - 1:00 The videotapes were played, one pair at a time, and the pair in question was asked to come to the front of the group and watch the monitor while the other people watched from further back. After each playing (which only took 60 - 90 seconds) the two characters on the tape were asked to comment on what they had seen and their reactions; then the group as a whole was asked to make any comments they wished.

1:00 - 1:30 Lecturette about communication given by Bill Bell. This was directed primarily to differentiate between verbal communication, gestural communication and contextual communication.

DAY (4) - May 4, 1970

9:00 - 9:30 Communication Game.

- a) People stand back-to-back and talk about anything for two minutes.
- b) People stand face-to-face looking into each other's eyes; there is no talking; they are to be thinking about the other person's thoughts for two minutes.
- c) Looking into each other's eyes and touching each other, but no talking; they think about each other's thoughts for two minutes.
- d) Touching by holding hands; they close their eyes; there is no talking for two minutes.
- e) Looking into each other's eyes; talking to each other; but no touching for two minutes.
- f) Touching, looking into each other's eyes; try to argue; make disparaging comments such as the other person's hair style for two minutes.

9:30 - 10:00 Fishbowl of the first heterogeneous group in the centre while Group B - the second heterogeneous group, observes on the outside. The task here is to describe how you felt and what went on when you were doing the communication exercise.

10:00 - 10:30 Feedback where Group B is in the centre while Group A is on the outside. Group B is asked to discuss what they saw going on in Group A.

10:30 - 11:00 Fishbowl with Group B in centre discussing how they felt during the communication exercise, while Group A is on the outside watching. Throughout these discussions they are asked to relate their experiencing of the communication exercises to the concept of alienation.

DAY (4) - Cont'd.

11:00 - 11:30 Feedback where Group A was in the centre talking about what they observed in Group B's fishbowl discussion of the communication exercise.

11:30 - 11:55 Paired confrontation. Here the partners complete some simple statements about the other partner in the pair. (These pairs were used throughout the eight weeks, made up of one social worker and one recipient who had chosen each other in the briefing).

Each member of the pair was asked to fill out answers to the following three questions on a form:

- a. How I see myself.
- b. How I see my partner.
- c. How I think my partner sees me.

and these forms were to be exchanged between partners once they were completed and discussed.

11:55 - 12:40 Mirror exercise. Here the people again write down on a piece of paper the views of themselves and their partner under the headings:

- a) How I keep you out.
- b) How you keep me out.

After writing these notes down they discussed them with each other, exchanging the notes as references.

12:40 - 1:00 Thematic Apperception Test stories. We asked the recipients to write down one-page stories to a number of T.A.T. cards which reflected family situations, depression and other scenes that appeared to be characteristic of alienation. There was no attempt to identify the recipient or social worker with the story, other than that they were either a recipient or a social worker.

DAY (5) - May 11, 1970

9:00 - 10:00 Focus on the Leaders.

David Jackson and Bill Bell were in the centre with five empty chairs, while the rest of the group sat around the outside.

Task: "What, about leaders, alienates group members? How does in-group feeling add to or detract from alienation?"

This hour session was included after several members of the group had discussed their unhappiness with the change of leaders between groups. A feeling was expressed that the two leaders were very different in their approaches and there was some resentment that the change was being made. It was thought that this situation should be explored from the point of view of its contribution to alienation and the ramifications for day-to-day life problems.

10:00 - 11:00 Tinker Toys. The two heterogeneous groups worked in two separate rooms. They used a set of tinker toys to prepare a model of their group.

(One member is chosen as a reporter to make a presentation; another member is chosen to watch the process within the group while they are deciding on and building the model. This person does not interact as a member of the group, but reports at the end of the session on the process that went on during the development of the model. Generally the model depicts in some way the total group and each member of the group.)

There was a great deal of discussion before the actual putting together of the pieces of tinker toys to make the representation.

DAY (5) - Cont'd.

- 11:00 - 11:30 Group A in fishbowl discussing the experiences they had while building the tinker toys. Group B observing from outside the fishbowl.
- 11:30 - 11:40 Group B in centre of fishbowl critiquing the process they observed in Group A.
- 11:40 - 12:10 Group B in fishbowl discussing experiences in the tinker toy task.
- 12:10 - 12:20 Group A in centre critically discussing the process they observed in Group B in the last thirty minutes.
- 12:20 - 1:00 General critical evaluation of the project progress to date. The groups as a whole were encouraged to discuss the progress they had been making as a group and as individuals. One of the major concerns at this point was how the "experiences" could be related to the research project.

DAY (6) - May 18, 1970

- 9:00 - 10:00 Group as a whole discussed the general processes going on in the group, with specific reference to differences in leadership style between the two leaders and the relationship of the experimental part of the program to the research objectives relating to alienation.
- 10:00 - 12:30 Two heterogeneous groups met in T-group format. Here the emphasis was on the concept of feeling, with the various members trying to relate how they felt about things going on in the group over the past few weeks and particularly how they felt about things within the "here and now" context of the present group experience.

DAY (6) - Cont'd.

12:30 - 1:00 Review of some basic principles of the interaction process which can produce growth.

- regard (not indifference)
- empathy (active listening)
- congruence (similarity between feelings and behaviour)
- genuineness (meaning what you say)
- openness (direct report of feelings)
- confrontation (not letting other people kid themselves)
- respecting the other's separateness

DAY (7) - May 25, 1970

9:00 - 10:00 T-group in two heterogeneous groups of 12.

10:00 - 10:30 Pairs - made up presentation for coming week, 'reaching consensus: "This what we did - this is what we need."

10:30 - 11:00 Each pair picked a pair from the other group to review and reach consensus on two elements of presentation. Complete agreement had to be reached.

11:00 - 11:30 Two other quartets found and, using all material, prepared point form presentation for the last day, to be made in 10 minutes.

11:30 - 11:50 Presentation by first group to second group. Second group to critique.

What We Did

1. We experienced alienation (groups, individuals, and as a result had a better understanding of what alienation is.)

DAY (7) - Cont'd.

2. We learned to eliminate alienation by:
 - a. dropping of roles
 - b. individual confrontation, with caring
 - c. communication of existing feelings.

What We Need

1. Continuation of this group (48 hr.).
2. Group session for worker and management.
3. More group sessions with clients and workers on local level.
4. Increased participation of clients on evaluation of services.
5. Clients and public should be more informed on right and benefits.
6. More understanding through communication on all levels.
7. Smaller case load to permit development or relationship of clients and worker.
8. Recognition of the fact that the clients emotional needs are important as physical needs.

11:50 - 12:10 Presentation by second group to first group.
First group to critique.

What We Did

1. Learned to express feelings about ourselves and others as human beings.
2. We studied alienation and how to reduce it.

DAY (7) - Cont'd.

3. Learned to feel in a caring way.
4. Learned to lower our defences.
5. Learned a process to work things through to an end.
6. Learned to relate to people rather than roles.

What We Need

1. A system that cares. More involvement and participation at all levels.
2. Let client be more aware of system and procedure.
3. System so worker and client can be aware of each other as people.
4. Needed more time for this project.
5. Trainers that are equivalent in leadership ability.
6. Needed better statement of objectives.
7. We need brotherly love.
8. More personal growth experiences - awareness of others.

12:10 - 1:00 As one large group we decided who would be invited to the last session and how it would be carried out.

DAY (8) - June 1, 1970

- 9:00 - 10:00 This was designed to be the meeting of the original heterogeneous group with their leader but because of difficulties in accommodation at the motel it was impossible to get started until 10:00 a.m.
- 10:00 - 11:00 Twelve officials who had been at the first session came in at this time. Six administrators and six recipients participated in the Virginia Satire, Communication Exercise.
- a) People back-to-back talk about anything.
 - b) Look into each other's eyes, no talking; think about what the other person is thinking.
 - c) Look into each other's eyes; touch each other; no talking; think about the other person's thoughts.
 - d) Touch (hold hands), eyes closed; no talking.
 - e) Look into each other's eyes; talking; no touching.
 - f) Touch; look into each other's eyes; try to argue.

After completing this, the six couples from the communication exercise met in the centre of the fishbowl while all the other participants sat around the outside and listened to them discuss their feelings during the exercise.

The remaining six administrators were paired up with six social workers who participated in a "trust" exercise.

(Here, each member of the group takes a turn at relaxing and rolling around the circle made by the group members who join hands to support them. The idea of a "trust" group is to, in some physical way, represent how an individual can be supported literally by group members.)

DAY (8) - Cont'd.

11:00 - 11:15

Feeling Snapshot. All participants were asked to express how they felt about what was going on by assuming one of the following four positions:

- a. If you are feeling very high, stand on a chair;
- b. If you are feeling moderately high, stand up;
- c. If you are feeling a little on the low side, sit on a chair;
- d. If you are feeling really low, sit on the floor.

The participants were then, after they have assumed this position, to hold it and look around them; then at a signal from the group leader were to do whatever they felt like doing towards the people around them. Often some tried to help people off the floor, or others wanted to discuss an unusual reaction with the participant.

11:15 - 12:15

Separated into three discussion groups composed of equal numbers of clients, workers and administrators, to discuss feelings that day and what was happening.

11:15 - 11:45

Group leaders met in the centre of the group with five empty chairs and there was a discussion of the process. At this point the Minister came into the group and took a position in the centre. This allowed the group to talk with him and have him become a member of the group for a short period of time.

11:45 - 12:30

Separated into three discussion groups composed of equal numbers of clients, workers and administrators to discuss feelings about that day and what was happening.

DAY (8) - Cont'd.

12:30 - 1:00

The three groups reported back their findings.

Group 1 - reported:

1. Administrators felt left behind.
2. Workers felt hostile towards the administrators (course).
3. Eight-week alienation/broke some barriers but administrators still felt that clients had a prejudice against them.
4. Group felt this process should be extended and go further.

Group 2 - reported:

1. Administrators felt group had assumed they had no human feelings.
2. How did this type of study profit the province? What was the accountability of a study of this type, and how could it be implemented on a broader scale?
3. Some people felt that some of the officials in the Minister's party did not care about the workers and recipients because they left early. (The Minister and some of his aides left before these group discussions began.)

Group 3 - reported:

1. Concern over the fact that some of the officials left early and that this might be a reflection of their commitment to this study.

DAY (8) - Cont'd.

2. "Is there a stereotyping of administrators?"
3. "We must relate to administrators where they are; not wait for them to change."
4. "There is a credibility gap which is used by the administrators as a source of power for them."
5. "Workers and administrators use each other as scapegoats."
6. "We are not treating clients as people; we are not socializing. Our contacts with them are stiff and artificial in a precast, professional mold."
7. "If you want people not professionals, do not expect professionalism - let them act as people."

1:00 - 1:20

David Jackson summarized the meeting and described how difficult it was to say goodbye.

IMPRESSIONS OF A RECIPIENT

CHAPTER III

IMPRESSIONS OF A RECIPIENT

Because of the experimental nature of this program it is difficult to capture on paper the full impact of what occurred. This is complicated by the fact that each participant seemed to bring different expectations and experiences to the seminar, and to take away a unique set of recollections and new insights.

In order to provide the reader with a personal view of what went on, we asked a recipient, Mrs. Darlene Germscheid to describe her impressions of the seminar. Her account is reproduced, unedited. We think it is not only a vivid portrayal of what transpired but an impressive piece of writing. It stands as a tangible example of the latent talent which can be tapped in recipients.

Impressions of Mrs. Darlene Germscheid
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Session One

When I walked into the auditorium that first morning, I carried with me a preconceived idea of what taking part in a study of alienation was going to mean to me personally. I had many ideas and opinions (which I had expressed many times and in many places) on the reason most clients were so alienated from the Department, and I felt that here would be an opportunity to convince the people involved that my ideas were valid and possibly get them down on paper. I wasn't counting too much on immediate results because I knew all too well that reports on studies such as these have a way of being filed away and forgotten, but I felt that anything was worth a try. The worst that could happen was that I would spend the next eight weeks involved in an interesting intellectual exercise for which I was getting paid. So I really had nothing to lose.

When I looked around and recognized such people as the Assistant Deputy Minister and the director of program consultants I began to get a little excited. After all, if people like these were to be a part of this project, maybe there was hope that it would achieve results. Then Dr. Jackson told us that the members of the administration would not be back with us until the final session and my heart sank a little; but as he went on to explain our objectives and the principles under which we would be working, my interest began to return. When he finally got to the point where he was telling us that we might become uncomfortable and even get a little mad before the session was over, I was sitting on the edge of my chair. This was no "intellectual exercise". This was really something different. He wasn't talking about policies and issues; he was talking about people. I wouldn't miss this for the world!

The first group task was a bit of a let-down. We were asked to move into groups of six - clients, social workers, or administrators, and discuss the improvements which could be made in the welfare system. This

had been done too many times before. It was just the kind of thing I had originally expected, and I certainly couldn't see it as having enough impact to make anybody mad; but Dr. Jackson had asked us to trust him and I was perfectly willing to do just that. I don't remember too many of the issues our little group talked about, except for the fact that we were tired of being numbers instead of people. The ladies seemed to feel that the system was not recognizing the fact that human beings have emotional as well as physical needs. When the time was up, the reporters from each group were asked to move into the centre and tell what their group had talked about. It was surprising to hear the administrators and social workers express concerns that were very similar to those of the clients; the main one being the Department's need to become more human, and when they mentioned some of their own problems such as "social workers being caught in the middle between client and policy" and their uncertainty regarding what was expected of them as social workers and administrators, I really began to feel for them. Then we went back to our groups to pick priorities and brainstorm for solutions and back to the fish-bowl again for more reporting and some discussion. While the whole process was very interesting, I didn't feel that I was learning much about alienation. Looking back now, I can see that perhaps we were a little less alienated from each other as individuals while we were all working on the same problems, but the fact that we were segregated according to roles created alienation between groups.

At the end of the session, Dr. Jackson talked to us again, and as he spoke of the project and the fact that each and every one of the clients and social workers involved were necessary in order to make it a success, I felt that I had become a part of something, and completely equal in importance to every other member of the project. At that moment I felt absolutely unalienated.

Session Two

At this session issues and roles began to move into the background while we became people again.

In the beginning we were asked to move into our original groups of six and to interview one other person so that we could introduce them to the group. As the introductions took place it was interesting to note that our particular roles were very evident at this time. Most of the social workers mentioned such things as the university they had attended, job histories, etc., with very little personal information, although one young woman was introduced as having lost a fiancé in an accident. The client group was a little less guilty of role-playing and divulged more information regarding number of children, place of residence, willingness to remarry, etc., but there was also some mention of the number of years on the program and which regional office they were with.

Then we were told to make up partnerships of one client and one social worker. I looked around, spotted a fellow I had spoken to briefly after the last session, and went over to ask him if he would be my partner. Once our pairs were established we were given the next task. First of all the group of social workers were put into the fish-bowl and told to talk about how they felt during the introductions, and each client was told to observe her partner and write down any comments that came to mind. I felt very good about this because we had been told to write the truth and I had a very secure feeling that in this situation honesty would be completely acceptable.

As I observed my partner, I got the feeling that here was a man with a very strong character and very much in control of himself and his life. I also wrote down that he had a pleasantly superior attitude about him. Afterwards I showed him what I had written and we talked about it. The comment about his superior attitude put him a bit on the defensive momentarily, and he seemed to feel that he had to explain but he certainly did not react negatively towards me because of it, and this reinforced my sense of security in the situation.

Then the clients got into the centre and began their discussion. It started out calmly enough until one particular woman began to speak. I had not talked to her before because she had been in the other client group but I had heard some remarks about the way she

pushed herself in and began to take command and I was aware that she had induced a bit of hostility from the other ladies. Now they were putting her in the "hot seat". Things really came to a head when she made a statement to the effect that "she was really superior to the rest of us anyway". You could almost hear the sound of closing doors as the women shut her out. I hated the whole conversation and ended up feeling the worst kind of pity for her because, although she may have been superior according to her terms of reference, she certainly was below par in her ability to relate to others; and therefore I concluded that she must have been a terribly lonely person. This was real alienation.

When I joined my partner again to discuss his observations he pointed out that I had been the first one to speak up and start things rolling as though the initial silence had made me very uncomfortable, and he also mentioned the fact that I had tried to act as an intermediary in the discussion. These comments were quite true and I didn't feel any particular reaction to them; but he had written two other things that did bring about a definite reaction. To quote: they were "nice legs" and "I wonder if she ever wears her hair back". As I read this I felt not only the pleasure that any woman feels when she receives a compliment, but a real feeling of being a person. I have met many social workers in many types of circumstances and not one of them, man nor woman, has ever seemed to be able to relate to me as anything other than a client, mother, and homemaker, and usually in that order; but somehow my partner's remarks had completely destroyed the labels and made me into a human being again. For the remainder of the study I feel that we were able to communicate on a person level without a trace of any kind of alienation.

In talking to others after the session, I found that the same type of thing had been happening in all the partnerships. It seemed as though people were learning to ignore the role and relate to the person underneath, and as a result they were becoming friends.

Session Three

We began the third session by breaking into two groups of six pairs each, with Dr. Jackson as our leader and Bill Bell with the other group. We then had what I call a "feel" conversation.

We started out by each one of us telling the group what thing we would most like to change about ourselves and listening to how the other members of the group felt about it. We were asked to react with feeling rather than thinking and some of us found this very difficult to do, but Dr. Jackson kept reminding us and as each one of us opened up a little more and expressed a little more of our real feelings, we began to create an atmosphere of closeness and trust. As we got to know each other's problems and feelings of inadequacy we began to care about the other person. We talked about how we felt about ourselves and each other, and it was a wonderful feeling to know that the feed-back we were getting was the honest opinion of someone who cared. One of the group members told me that she found it hard to relate to me because I seemed so cool and composed (or something to that effect), and I felt a real sense of discovery because no one had ever told me that before, and yet when she said it I realized that I do have a tendency to hide my feelings from others at times. There were a few others like myself who were not exposing themselves to any great degree, and yet I think we all knew that in this group we would be able to do so quite safely and it was just that some of us would take longer than others.

There were moments that morning when I felt as much a part of that group as a part of my family. There were no social workers or clients there, just people. Alienation was nonexistent.

During the morning we were taken, one pair at a time, into a sort of corridor and given written instructions to "push each other down to the floor and help each other up" while the whole process was being filmed with V.T.R. equipment. I didn't mind a bit when my partner put me

down. I wasn't afraid of being hurt or even the least bit uncomfortable with the process; but when it was my turn to push him I didn't want to do it, although I knew I would go through with the exercise. He was strong enough that I knew that I wouldn't be able to push him down unless he allowed it and this would be rather patronizing so I eventually tried to trip him. When we watched it on camera afterwards I also noticed that when I did get him down I became quite aggressive in trying to get him right to the floor. This exercise, talking about it to the group, and thinking about it since then, has pointed out a few things in my character of which I had previously had only the vaguest awareness.

When I attempted to trip my partner, I was reacting as I do with any aspect of society that tries to patronize me. Patronization is a demeaning thing and when I am confronted with it I immediately experience a great need to prove my equality. I realize now the cause of some the unrealistic demands I have made on myself since I became dependent on Social Assistance.

This reaction to being "put down" didn't do much to explain my willingness to allow my partner to push me down and help me up, or my aggressiveness when he was down, but I feel that these things were an indication of my attitudes towards men in general. Although I have a great desire to prove my equality to society, I still need a dominant figure in my life and I expect a man to fill this role. When the man allows me to be the dominant one I feel that I am losing my femininity and resent him for it. This has helped me to explain a great many things in my marriage which had left me rather confused.

I cannot be sure that everyone got as much out of this exercise as I did, but in watching the others on the monitor and listening to the discussions, I believe that we saw many indications of hidden hostilities and conflicting emotions, and I'm sure that everyone gained something from it.

Session Four

We began this session by teaming up with our partners and going through a series of Virginia Satire exercises. For two minutes each we did such things as talking back to back, looking into each others eyes, holding hands with our eyes closed, and attempting to argue.

My partner had a great deal of difficulty looking directly into my eyes for any length of time and kept looking away. This rather amused me because this man gave the impression that there was no situation that he could not have handled quite competently, and yet a little thing like looking into my eyes for two minutes seemed to be too much for him. His discomfort was painfully obvious, but it was rather reassuring to know that even someone like him could have his sensitive moments.

When we were holding hands with our eyes closed, I felt his strength again in his warm, firm grip and I felt very secure. Then I began thinking about the exercise in terms of communication and to imagine what things would be communicated if my partner were someone else. In other words I began to intellectualize about the process and I concluded that there was very little communication between us as compared to what there would have been if my partner had been someone with whom I had a real emotional attachment.

When we were given instructions to argue I did not think that it would be possible until he began expressing doubts about the validity of the whole study. This rather upset me for two reasons. One was the fact that the study had begun to mean a great deal to me, in terms of both personal development and the contribution I felt it could make in changing the whole system. The other thing was that I really felt bad that he was not reaping the same benefits that I was, and it became very important to me that he should share my enthusiasm.

After this, Dr. Jackson's group and Bill Bell's group alternated in the fish-bowl, and we began to see the first indications of alienation between the groups, we had obviously been proceeding in two different directions.

Our group members had really begun to relate to each other with feeling, even to the point where one of the men confronted another with the statement: "You really bug me sometimes." Dr. Jackson immediately got them down on the floor and with their feet braced together they began to try to push each other away, while the group discussed what was happening and how they felt about it. The whole incident took place with no evidence of hostility from anyone. The two fellows even said that they would like to have the opportunity to meet on the golf course.

The other group seemed to feel that we had become rather barbaric and they were very upset by the fact that we were not saying only nice things to each other; although one or two individuals appeared to be very disappointed with the attitudes of their group. One young woman said that she felt that her group members were being very phony and openly blamed another woman who was trying her best to keep it that way. This woman seemed to have a real concern that honest criticism would be a destructive thing.

Then we were each given a form to fill out. It had three sections to it and they were headed as follows:

- a. How I see myself.
- b. How I see my partner.
- c. How I think my partner sees me.

We were asked to complete this form and show it to our partners for discussion. I found again as I had in the previous exercise of this type, that my partner was relating to me on a real person-to-person basis. From what he wrote it seemed as though he had come to know me better in these few mornings than many people that I've known for years.

The very last item of the morning was the T.A.T. test where we were asked to write a short story to go with each picture we were shown. I rather enjoyed this because I liked to write, and even though I was aware that these tests were a method of psychological testing I wasn't disturbed. My only concern was that I would not have access to the eventual analysis.

Session Five

The whole morning was a fantastic example of alienation. It was evident between groups, and even between the groups and the leaders. We began with more group discussion and fish-bowling, but this time with a change in leadership. This was when the real animosity between the groups became obvious.

They accused us of being insensitive to the feelings of others, and we accused them of being a lot of phony people trying too hard to be nice. We felt that we had gotten ahead of them and they resented us feeling superior. There was some disagreement among the members of their group as to whether we had actually left them behind, but in our group there seemed to be almost total agreement on that point.

After some time at this, each group was given a set of Tinker Toys and told to create a model of their group. We were also asked to appoint a reporter to describe the process and someone to explain the model.

We had very little difficulty in deciding on these two people, but the process of creating the model itself was no other thing. We started out with a lot of disorganization and a lot of people doing their own thing, but when we got to the last few minutes of the allotted time, we quickly reached a consensus and got down to the business of putting our model together. The result was rather lacking in aesthetic beauty but it was nonetheless a good model of our group. It had a main hub which represented the essence of the group (possibly Dr. Jackson) with spokes of varying lengths and design representing the various members and their feelings toward the group as a whole.

The other group came up with a beautiful model composed of two wheels with six spokes each representing the clients and the social workers, with Bill Bell as one of the spokes, and an object at the end of a long spoke swinging around the outside of the structure which symbolized the illlusiveness of the goal. Their reporter told us that they had had little difficulty in deciding

on the structural design of their model, and had proceeded smoothly toward the completion of the task.

In the discussion which followed we came to the conclusion that both models clearly illustrated the types of groups we had become. While our group seemed to be far more closely knit, the other group was definitely more task-oriented. I felt that although our members were much more individualistic and therefore perhaps a little less efficient; the other group were really only as effective as the clarity of their goals enabled them to be.

As the discussion continued, more and more evidence of alienation was to be seen so Dr. Jackson got us all to move into one big circle to talk it out. Our members expressed a lot of resentment for the change in leadership, and we were accused by the other group of being dependent on Dr. Jackson. One girl who had said very little up to this time told us that she felt that she had really been prepared to open up and now she would not be able to. My partner, who had expressed many doubts about Dr. Jackson's methods previously, now seemed very concerned about losing him. The other group seemed to feel that we were demeaning Bill's ability and rushed right in to defend him although they showed very little concern over losing him. Then someone criticised Dr. Jackson for springing the T.A.T. test on us and said that he felt that he had mentally had his pants taken down. Someone else brought up the point that Dr. Jackson abused one of his own stated principles. He had gone ahead and made the decision to change leaders without consulting us, although we were the ones who would be affected by the change. He admitted that he had unwittingly done just that, and that in both this and the matter of the T.A.T. test, he had slipped up; but he assured us that he would do his best to learn from the mistake and to remedy the existing situation. His honesty and frankness seemed to renew our faith in him and the atmosphere began to change immediately. It was now lunch-time and we were forced to leave things as they were until the next session.

Session Six

Dr. Jackson kept his promise and we began the morning in one large group so that we might have the opportunity to discuss the change of leadership, how we felt about it and what we wanted to do about it. After some discussion, a woman from the other group put her finger right on the issue when she asked our group to define the mysterious "it" that we were afraid of losing if we lost Dr. Jackson. We finally came to the consensus that it was something that had to be experienced to be understood, and we must have aroused their curiosity because I noticed that many more of their members were more than willing to admit that we had something that they wanted to find out about. Our group had changed too. We seemed to feel, now, that Bill deserved a chance with our group and that the other group deserved a chance to have Dr. Jackson. The alienation between the groups was beginning to dissipate and we were now functioning more as one group trying to decide what was best for everyone concerned, including Dr. Jackson, Bill, and the study as a whole.

As we began to relate to each other on a one to one basis, something began to happen to me personally, and for the first time I really felt that there were things that I had to say. It began when I was talking to a woman from the other group who I had known personally for some time. This woman had always appeared to be afraid of honest confrontation, so, although we called ourselves "friends", I had always felt that I was not free to say the things I wanted to say to her. For this reason I was developing a lot of hidden hostility towards her and this was very disturbing to me. Now these feelings were rising to the surface and before I knew it I was talking about them. I can't fully describe how I felt at the time, except to say that I felt both nervous and uncomfortable, and yet at the same time I felt as though a great load had been lifted from me. Once I had begun I wanted to spill everything. I wanted to tell the people about every emotion that I had been hiding away. I wanted to talk about loneliness and unhappiness and feelings of inadequacy; but I had kept these things to myself too long to open up now when things were so uncertain in the group

and the whole process was coming to an end, so I let them all go back into hiding.

Nonetheless, I came away from the experience much better off. My friend and myself have a new kind of friendship within the realistic limitations of our personalities, and I have realized that even my most submerged and disturbing emotions can be brought out and exposed and looked at in a new way. I'm patiently waiting for another exercise in sensitivity.

Shortly after this, Dr. Jackson asked each person if they wanted to continue in the large group or move into smaller ones, and how they felt about a change in leadership. Most people preferred the smaller group and said that they would be willing to accept the leadership change. One of the comments was "I don't really care how we do it as long as we get on with it." So we moved back into the two small groups with our new leaders.

The rest of the morning was a tragedy for our group. At first we seemed to be talking about nothing, as though we were testing Bill's leadership, and when nothing happened we became desperate. We had always followed the principle of confrontation with caring and had never before tried to force anyone to open up if they weren't ready, but now we actually seemed to pounce on the woman who had previously made the statement about her superiority. All through the previous sessions we had taken her attitude to be a protective wall and we had respected that wall, but now we tried to tear it down and we tried to force her to expose her feelings to us. It didn't take long for us to realize what we were doing and to recognize the reasons behind it. We immediately withdrew and tried to start again in the direction that we had been going with Dr. Jackson.

All this time we could hear the other group talking and more than one of us were paying more attention to them than we were to each other. The whole thing

came to an end when one of the girls who had been very quiet and withdrawn began to talk about some real feelings for the first time, and Bill reacted by expressing doubts about her qualifications as a social worker. The effect on the group was shattering. There were some members who told him how they felt about his remark and the consensus seemed to be that he had betrayed us. After that no one talked about feelings anymore and the conversation centred around small talk and minor issues. Long before the other group was making any motion of breaking for lunch, several of our members were looking at their watches and gathering together their belongings.

Session Seven

We began the morning in our two groups supposedly to talk about how we felt about reaching the end of the project, but "feel" conversations had come to an end in our group. There were a few feeble attempts but we soon drifted back into the same type of superficial conversation with which we had ended the last session.

The next step was to prepare a presentation for next week. We did this by reaching a consensus in our pairs, then in groups of four, then twelve, and finally in one large group. The points we were to consider were: "This is what we did" and "This is what we need", so I'll deal with this part of this report under these two headings.

"This is what we did" -- We seemed to feel that we had mainly done two things. First of all, we experienced alienation and developed a better understanding of it. Secondly, we learned some important means of eliminating alienation. We felt that if we had followed the principles that were stated at the beginning we would have completely removed all signs of alienation from the group, and yet, we actually learned more about it by the mistakes that were made.

The principle of "Act, critique, then act" was applied all of the way through the study and it kept alienation to a minimum, but I wonder how many of us realized that

this was the thing that kept everything from getting out of control when the whole study was threatened by the animosity that had built up between the groups and towards the leaders.

When Dr. Jackson made the decision to change leaders and administer the T.A.T. test without consulting the participants, thereby abusing the principle that stated that decision making should be located where the information sources are, a whole lot of alienation was created and it didn't take long for us to discover the reason.

The best examples of confrontation without caring were our desperate attack on the woman in our group and Bill's confronting the young social worker with his doubts about her qualifications. From these incidents we learned two important things. One was how quickly this type of action causes the walls to go up and builds alienation; and the other was the reason that these actions occur. I believe that both ourselves and Bill reacted out of our own insecurity. We had built up a real feeling of trust with Dr. Jackson and losing him kind of pulled the props out from under us, and in return we had made Bill very much aware of the fact that we did not have the same faith in him and had even told him that if he did not come through we would eliminate him. This must have caused him to feel very insecure with our group.

The application of the "Here and now" principle was so consistent that I'm not too sure what would have happened if it had been withdrawn, but I do believe that it was an important part of the process because it kept us moving. The same thing applies to the principle of "Experience it, don't describe it." Without these two principles it is quite possible that we might have continually digressed from the main theme and achieved nothing.

The "equality of people when working on a problem" as a factor of alienation was illustrated many times, both by the creation of alienation when one woman made claims of superiority, and by the reduction of it when social workers related to their client partners as equals.

We certainly learned the importance of "reducing inappropriate competition" when it showed up between the two groups and caused so much alienation that it became a threat.

The last two principles: "Use each other not roles" and "Develop open communication - mutual trust" were the ones that I believe did the most to eliminate alienation, and I feel that this was especially evident in the group I was in. The closeness and unity between our members was strong and consistent all through the whole process, and when we felt that Bill had violated our trust, we all reacted as one man.

"This is what we need" -- We all felt a personal need for a continuation of this group, but most of all I think we felt that it was important for this type of thing to happen to others; both with clients and workers on a local level, and with workers and administrators. We also felt that there was a definite need for these principles to be applied to the philosophy of the system as a whole, with more client participation, smaller case loads, more communication on all levels, more personal growth experiences, and the recognition of emotional needs.

The last part of the morning was spent in deciding who we wanted to be with at the last session and what we wanted to say to them. Our biggest concern was that they be made to feel what we have been feeling with the hope that they would then understand the need for these recommendations to be given a great deal of consideration.

Session Eight

As we began that morning I was pleased to see that almost all of the administrators that we had invited had managed to find time in their schedules to spend the morning with us.

Role-playing was the basis of the first exercise. We were asked to walk around the room as though we were on the way to pick up a welfare cheque, as if we were administrators on the way to a meeting, and as if we were on the way home to our families. This didn't have much effect on me personally but I imagine it did a lot to ease the tension for some of the administrators, but I feel that some of them began to see the whole process as a kind of game.

Then each of the administrators was teamed up with someone and we did the Virginia Satire exercises. The partner I had seemed to be a little mad about the process but he followed instructions nonetheless. When he was told to look straight into my eyes he never wavered for an instant; and when we were told to argue he immediately made a statement to the effect that the only way the system can be damaging to a client is if the client allows it to happen, knowing full well that I would have to argue with that. I think he really believed what he was saying but I never had the chance to find out for sure.

After this, half of this group were asked to sit in a circle for some fish-bowling. Before starting the conversation, everyone was asked to introduce the person sitting next to them. I was very pleased to note that these introductions were mostly composed of very personal observations such as: "seems to be a very warm person", "easy to talk to", and "someone I would like to know better".

At some time previous to this, The Honourable Rene Toupin, Minister, and Walter Boyd, Assistant Deputy Minister, had come in along with Mr. Toupin's executive secretary, and shortly after we began our discussion in the fish-bowl. Mr. Toupin moved in to occupy one of the chairs. That, to me, became the highlight of the day. He expressed his sincere interest in the project and told us that he had some contact with similar groups and was very much in favour of this type of thing. The very best part was when one of the members from outside of the circle

asked him if he could give us some assurance that the report would not be filed away and forgotten. He replied by saying, "The report on this project will be filed away under my dead body." When he said this I believed him, and it was all I could do to restrain myself from giving out with a rousing cheer or throwing my arms around him in gratitude. He had to leave at this time and I was sorry to see him go but we had been told that this would be the case when we issued the invitation. I was really surprised and disappointed when Mr. Boyd left with him, though, because he had accepted the invitation for the whole morning.

After the fish-bowl conversation, we were asked to walk around the room some more. Then Dr. Jackson told us to get down on the floor, sit down, remain standing, or stand up on a chair, depending on how we felt about what had happened so far. I was so elated by Mr. Toupin's comments that I had not come right down yet, so, even though I had been disappointed when Mr. Boyd left and a little depressed at the realization that the administrators were so out of tune with us in spite of themselves, I remained standing; but a few people got down on the floor and many more sat on chairs.

We found out the reason for this when we moved into three small discussion groups. There was an awful lot of hostility directed towards Mr. Boyd because of the feeling that, after his declaration of interest at the first session, the fact that he had not found time to give us his whole morning was evidence of his insincerity. As one of the social workers put it - "He obviously just doesn't care about us." We also found that while many of the administrators tried to take part in a "feel" conversation, there were a few who seemed to resent the whole process.

When we moved back into the large group, each reporter gave a summation of what had happened in that particular discussion and it seemed apparent that all groups had expressed the same feelings. Dr. Jackson then opened the discussion for any final comments and most of this time was spent in expressing formal "thank you's and goodbye's".

As I write this report, I have no guarantee that it's going to be well received, or even that it's going to be read; but one thing I know for sure. I personally, have gained tremendously by my participation in this project. Even if the Department sees fit to ignore the whole thing, I know that I am a little more aware of myself as an individual and a little more conscious of the fact that administrators, social workers, and clients are all just ordinary people when the roles disappear, and as a result I honestly believe that I am more capable of living a full life and overcoming the disadvantages of being a "client" than I was before.

PARTICIPANTS' REACTIONS

CHAPTER IV

PARTICIPANTS' REACTIONS

Participants' Comments During the Group Sessions

One member of the research team was able to observe throughout most of the eight sessions, and made notes on actual quotes. While this was not done systematically (in that every comment was recorded) it does give a vivid picture of what was said by the social workers and recipients during the confrontation sessions. These comments in turn seem to suggest some general topics, which have been analyzed under the following three headings:

- Personal Attitudes
- Individual Versus the Group
- Special Problems of Deserted Wives

Personal Attitudes

In general the social workers seemed reserved and rigid while the recipients, by comparison, were relaxed, moving into a friendly mode of interaction more quickly. An example of this can be seen in the way the two groups introduced each other. The social workers tended to introduce each other in terms of their status, describing their education and types of assignments with very little personal reference. The recipients, in introducing other recipients, mentioned how many children they had, the size of their home, how long they had been separated, how they got along with their children, and finally whether they were interested in remarrying. A typical introduction by a social worker would be:

"This is Miss Smith. She graduated with her M.S.W. from the University of Manitoba in 1962, then went to work at the Department of Welfare. Her first assignment was with child care and protection cases and she moved to in-take. She has now been at the south office for eight months. She has lived in Manitoba all her life and has a pet paraquet."

The recipients' comments were dramatically different:

"This is Betty Jones. She has three children, ages 7, 14 and 17. They live in a three room apartment and share cooking facilities with another family. She says she gets along well with all her children except the 14 year old, who sometimes gives her a hard time. She likes people and enjoys going to dances and musicals. She is proud that she is a good mother and thinks that she has a good relationship with her neighbours. She has been divorced since 1961, but says if the right man came along she would be willing to get married again."

The following themes came up during the discussions:

1. Resentment Between Social Workers and Recipients.

Worker: *"I wanted to scream at the first meeting, 'I'm a person too'."*

Recipient: *"All workers feel recipients are worthless nothings, with no outside interests."*

Recipient: *"Whenever a worker comes you always worry because they may cut off a few dollars for some reason."*

2. Social Workers are Unable to Relax

Worker: *"I wish someone would put me on the spot and make me express my feelings."*

Worker: *"I hope to go out into the field and carry through my relationship with my clients and view them more as individuals."*

Worker: *"I don't want to be cold."*

Worker: *"I don't want people to laugh at me."*

3. Social Workers were More Anxious About Change of Leaders

Worker: *"Change is always an unpleasant thing."*

Worker: *"I came as a volunteer and now the competition between groups caused stress and alienation."*

Worker: *"All (the group) weren't consulted about the leader change and I resent it."*

Individual Versus the Group

1. Social Workers Versus the System Causes Frustration

Worker: *"I think we are sacrificing our individuality for the group goal. I feel crucified."*

Worker: *"I feel frustrated -- you want me to act as an individual; the group wants me to act as part of it."*

Worker: *"The system was being criticized and I'm part of the system."
(Answer to question, 'What makes you feel alienated?')*

2. Mutual Distrust

Worker: *"I resent a recipient saying that she likes me and likes being confronted."*

Recipient: *"I feel frustrated; I can't convince her that I do like her."*

Worker: *"I don't have enough friends in the group."*

3. Recipients are not Able to Communicate with the Outside World

Recipient: *"I have found that I don't really hate people as much as I thought I did."*

Recipient: *"I wouldn't want your friendship because I'd feel that you were being my friend because you feel sorry for me."*

4. Social Workers and Recipients in "Game Playing" Situations

Worker: *"I didn't like the idea of your playing games with me."*

Recipient: *"If you don't play my way you don't play ... is the way social workers play the game with you."*

Special Problems of Deserted Wives

Special problems of deserted wives were discussed on several occasions. This was due to the fact that a preponderance of the recipients in the group fell into this category. The range of feelings -- from deep resentment and hostility to complete denial -- are shown in the selection of quotations below:

Recipient: *"A man can't love a woman as a woman does a man."*

Recipient: *"I don't feel resentful of my husband. I think he is great for leaving me."*

Question: *"Why does a man get married?"*

Recipient: *"He wants a harem."*

Recipient: *"He wants to be waited on."*

Worker: *"Social pressure!"*

It can be seen from these comments that the social workers are more status conscious and rigid in their approach to problems, with a traditional but more intellectual mode of dealing with life situations. Recipients seem less intellectual, but more open and more concrete in their approach to life.

Thematic Apperception Test Results

The Thematic Apperception Test was developed by Henry Murray, Harvard University, and has been used extensively by psychologists in clinical practice to explore the perceptions (particularly those with social relevance) of people.

Five cards from the test battery were used and recipients were asked to compose stories, with instructions given in the T.A.T. manual. This technique is supposed to reveal dominant drives, emotions, sensations and conflicts of personality, with particular relevance to the social matrix and the culture in which a person finds himself. Since the pictures are ambiguous but have human characters in them, it was thought they represented particularly fertile grounds for the respondents to project their own inner feelings and conflicts.

Viewed in hindsight, it was a mistake to give the T.A.T. since it was contrary to the basic principle of the confrontation program (as some of the respondents noted later in the sessions). Since we were attempting to be open and frank, the T.A.T. (which is a method of uncovering basic attitudes and emotions of which the respondent is often not conscious) provided an aura of mystery and subtle subversion which produced a resounding clash to the atmosphere of harmony and trust being built. I would not use this technique again in a confrontation program of this type, but I think it is important to summarize briefly the themes which differentiated the social workers from the recipients.

The social workers' stories were more intellectual. They spoke mainly in general terms -- such as frustration, despair, emptiness. Often their stories sounded like educational lectures, lacking personal involvement. A strong conscience or super-ego function ran through the stories giving them a moralistic tone, critical of materialistic values and emphasizing high morality -- with a particularly common theme of good family life in country settings.

The recipients used stories which were much more concrete. While the earthy and very alive features of the stories were present, there was a lack of imagination or creativity, and a common dead-end feature to them. The lack of optimism and hopefulness at the end of the stories is characterized as under-achievement by Murray. Added to these common themes were the special life experiences of the recipients, resulting in (because they were deserted wives for the most part) an unflattering characterization of men as cruel, untrustworthy and self-centred.

From these findings it would appear that the social workers and recipients had very profound differences in terms of attitude and perception towards life and human situations in general. This was not due in total to the fact that one group was composed of recipients and the other of social workers; it seemed to reflect not only differences in background, but differences in their cognitive net. The social workers elected to forego immediate gratification for a long-term payoff, in a highly repressive, status-oriented system of university degrees. The world of the recipients was almost diametrically opposed; here, from a cognitive point of view we saw people who dealt with the immediate -- concretely, frankly and openly -- but with little appreciation of what was going on in their lives and perhaps unable to see the relationships between contingent events and outcomes.

A good example of this was the description, vividly made by one recipient, of how she felt about her life. She said:

"It was like sitting in a boat on a stormy ocean. When the wind began to blow the waves became higher and higher and she was afraid she would be thrown out of the boat and would drown. Once out of the boat she was struggling to try to swim to the top, to get air, to breathe; but the continuous struggling to reach the surface was always followed by drifting down again and the wish to let herself go and be submerged to the bottom of the ocean where the slime and muck were, and lie there with a peaceful end to her struggling."

These two primary themes then -- one of being unable to control in a hostile environment; the other of wishing to find some sort of rest from the continual fight for mere survival, even though that rest meant badness -- is a graphic way of describing what many of the recipients feel as part of their internal alienating mechanisms.

Formal Evaluation of Seminar

Three to five weeks after the seminar was completed, a member of the research team interviewed as many of the social workers, recipients and administrators as could be seen. Some administrators were able to complete the questionnaire on their own and mailed them to us. Following is a summary of the reactions of those who participated, from a perspective of three to five weeks after the experiment wound up.

Reaction

In answer to the question, "What did you think of the seminar?" the reaction was unanimously favourable. For example, one recipient wrote a special letter to us in which she said:

"I'm sitting at home crying because the seminars are all over and saying good-bye is so hard."

Favourable reactions generally fell into four categories:

1. There were those who made a blatant statement about the positive nature of the experience.

"I found them enjoyable, enlightening and stimulating."

"Very exciting to attend."

"Very interesting and rewarding."

"I was happy with it."

2. Another group of participants discussed the openness and freedom of the course as the outstanding characteristic.

"I learned to speak out."

"Sessions were mind provoking; plenty of food for thought."

*"I found as I opened up to people,
people opened up to me and were
more honest."*

*"It gave me the experience of
feeling and not describing."*

3. For many participants, the most important aspect was the self-confidence acquired, which was based on better and deeper self-understanding.

*"I have learned to have more
confidence in myself."*

*"I learned a lot about myself
as a person."*

"I strengthened myself."

4. Some participants commented on the applications of the process to other aspects of their work life.

*"It helped me to face reality and
accept it."*

*"The week-to-week contact on an informal
basis gave clients and workers a much
greater feeling of involvement."*

"I learned to be more human with clients."

*"It helped clients and workers to see
each other as people -- it would be
great and beneficial to see adminis-
trators as people."*

In addition to these general reactions, recipients emphasized the one, unique aspect of experience, which undoubtedly did much to counteract the alienation.

"I never felt not wanted."

*"I was able to converse with people
in a higher income bracket."*

*"I began to feel more like a person
with a right to my own opinions."*

*"I found that I don't really hate
people as much as I thought I did."*

For some recipients it provided an opportunity for relief from extreme pressures. As one recipient noted:

*"Everyone was so pleasant and friendly,
and I could relax and forget all my
troubles at home."*

Another indication of the support given by the participants was in answer to the question, "Would you attend any other sessions of this type?" All social workers and 75% of the recipients answered in the affirmative. The most undecided group was the administrators -- 50% of them said, "Don't know."

Long Term Effects

It is traditional for people when interviewed immediately after a training course, to comment in rather glowing terms about the value of experience to them. More important, perhaps, was the actual change in behaviour that occurred after the training sessions. We asked the participants when we interviewed them several weeks later, to comment on specific incidents occurring since the seminar in which some experience or something they had learned, was of help to them. The incidents listed below seem to fall into four categories and were mentioned with the same degree of frequency by the recipients and social workers interviewed by us.

1. Family Interpersonal Relationship

*"I found it a lot easier to make
decisions about the family and
the children without getting so
up tight."*

"In my personal life I used to put my feelings second. Now I learned to trust them more."

"I'm incorporating the 'fish-bowl' and 'expression of feeling' techniques into our family discussions."

2. Openness of Communication

One recipient reported:

"When I did the interview with my worker I got to know him much better and we've had a better understanding since."

The social worker stated:

"I'm able to cope with different personalities much easier."

"I can approach people more easily."

Most important for recipients perhaps, was a new, positive outlook on life. Our recipients - deserted wives - were helped in overcoming the feeling of loneliness and the strong hostility toward men. As one recipient expressed it:

"I have opened doors I thought were shut forever, in relationship to men. Since my ex-husband left I have had only a poor taste in my mouth."

3. Impact on Professional Behaviour of Social Workers

"I was made more aware of, more conscious of, clients' emotional as well as material needs."

"I'm really sincere and honest when dealing with clients now."

4. The Effect of Personal Experience on Alienation

The alienation between administrators and social workers was probably the most surprising discovery for all participants. One administrator stated:

"I realized that the feeling of alienation between workers and senior administrators is greater in some cases than between the clients and workers."

A typical comment of a recipient was:

"I realize the difficulty between workers and administrators."

Some administrators expressed criticism toward social workers:

"Workers' attitudes toward the administration alienates clients toward the administration."

Many participants mentioned that learning about the causes of alienation helped to reduce their own feeling of alienation. One social worker found most important:

"The personal experience of alienation and the effect which this had on trust and my desire to overcome the alienation."

Another comment by a recipient was:

"The sessions made me realize, alienation can be overcome."

Some participants commented specifically on the laboratory techniques, which were useful to them in terms of understanding alienation:

"The most rewarding was the exercise of throwing down the client and worker."

*"I experienced alienation when
the leaders were changed."*

*"Fish-bowl was one way of
reducing alienation."*

*"All group discussion
eliminated group alienation."*

Some participants reported more general causes of alienation. One social worker mentioned:

*"The system tends to depersonalize
people. One keeps hearing a
terrible need to be accepted
as 'me'."*

Other comments were:

*"Lack of communication on
different levels."*

*"I learned that communication -
words and concepts - had
different values for each
person."*

Major Drawbacks and Disadvantages Associated with the Seminar

Limited Scope

The vast majority of participants, when asked about disadvantages or drawbacks, emphasized:

- a) That the administration should be involved throughout the whole project.
- b) That a wider scope of clients from different situations should be involved.

One administrator mentioned:

"Those who came were the elite, or people who aspire to be part of the elite."

Another complaint was, that all recipients were female. The recipients felt that there should be male recipient representation to get the outlook of "a man who once was a wage earner and now had to accept handouts."

Sessions Too Spread Out

There should be continuous sessions on a day-to-day basis. The fact the sessions were one week apart sometimes made it difficult to maintain continuity in the opinion of some of the respondents.

It was interesting to contrast the experience in Manitoba with that in British Columbia. In the British Columbia sessions the concentrated experience led to greater impact but it is important that the reader try to assess whether there was a greater carry-over as a result of greater impact, or if indeed more changes resulted from exposure over a longer period of time.

In my opinion the encounter sessions over a longer period of time generally led to greater change within the system as a whole on the part of the recipients,

they could go out, try things and come back to deal with them in the group. Since our measure of the effects of these programs was not pinpointed, it is impossible to say empirically which type of confrontation program was most effective.

TABLE 4.1

Would you attend any other seminar?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMINIS- TRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Yes	9	9	3	21	72.4
No	1	-	1	2	6.9
Don't know	2	-	4	6	20.7
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

FINDINGS

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

It is difficult to generalize from 12 welfare workers and 12 recipients to the welfare system in the Province of Manitoba. The data collected was based on unstructured group discussions and a questionnaire administered some time after the group sessions had been completed. Perhaps, the most important finding is that this type of group confrontation can reduce both client and worker alienation. In the final section of this chapter we hope to present data that will support this contention. This, coupled with the positive reaction of the participants which was referred to in a previous chapter, was a major objective of this demonstration research project. However, many other important issues arose during the course of our discussions and we would like to review the most salient ones.

In this chapter we will deal with a simple model of the system described in Figure 5.1. First, the largest element is the community as a whole followed by the recipient group. Then there is a small cadre of welfare workers and finally, a relatively small group of administrators running the system. The arrows indicate that the majority of communication is upward by virtue of the nature of the system. There are a lot more recipients wanting to talk to one social worker and in turn, a lot more social workers wanting to talk to one administrator than visa versa. It will become apparent as we go through the various findings relating to these elements in the system that one of the things which is happening is a demand for reversal of this communication flow, so that it is more equalized up and down. Another thing which should be mentioned is that various levels in the system tend to buffer each other so that the administrator rarely sees recipients and recipients in turn have little to do with the administrator. This, of course, puts the social worker at a high pressure point in the system which we will discuss as we develop the findings.

The Community

We asked participants what they thought was the basic problem area in the system. Table 5.1 shows that in general 73% of all participants find the basic problem to be the social attitudes which create the ideology of the system. If we look at each group separately, we find that 100% of administrators and 89% of social workers see the roots of the problem in the attitude of the community toward people on welfare. Half the recipients agree that the problem lies in the community while the other half suggests the problem is between social workers and administrators.

For the recipient, the community with its pressures and prejudices is one of his greatest sources of alienation. General values, and in particular, the work-ethic, in the competitive get-ahead approach of North American living, are antagonistic to the recipient's life conditions. The attitude "Those that work are good, those that do not are not", strongly reflects on many recipient's self-image. We asked recipients to give first or second-hand accounts of incidents which had caused alienation. Their accounts centred around the following themes:

- The status of being poor and community prejudices about that status.
- Society considers me an inferior citizen.
- I am ashamed of being on welfare.
- Having to carry around the welfare label because I have to ask for support.

Half the participants felt that most people think it is shameful to be on welfare as indicated in Table 5.2. In the words of one social worker, "Society holds the person who depends on others as of little worth." A recipient expresses this in a more concrete term, "Once society knows that you are on welfare you are trapped. You're not good to even speak to. You are referred to as 'those welfare people'."

Thus, people who take welfare assistance step into a leper class in their opinion, among other members of the community. Whether this is right or wrong from a moral point of view, we must be aware by the very virtue that applying for or receiving welfare increases the social pressures under which one labours. By asking for help, he increases his own alienation from his neighbours at least from his point of view and from the point of view of the social workers in the system.

Feeling of Hopelessness

The recipients have a strong feeling of hopelessness. For example, the stories they told to the five thematic aperception test pictures are characteristically depressive. The plots are mostly based on human beings facing indomitable enemies, poverty, social insecurity, and unhappiness with no way out. One recipient stated it this way, "If you keep going on beating your head against a wall, next time you are a little less a person."

In our group of recipients, personal problems were predominantly those of deserted wives. Many of the recipient stories have themes of loneliness which becomes so depressive that at times the leading character in the story expresses a desire to die. In the following example, a recipient presents a description of life attitude which was typical of many. Here there is an unsuccessful rebellion against the unhappy life situation. The main character must resign herself to her destiny making only minor attempts to adjust to the painfulness of her social condition.

She had missed her train! It took her weeks to get up enough courage to take this step and now she had missed it. Her husband had been an alcoholic for many years; she couldn't stand it any longer. A few weeks ago she made the decision to get out. She had carefully saved the money for the fare and built up her courage until tonight when she had packed a

bag while he was sleeping off a three-day drunk, and had stolen off. Then she found she had missed the train. She knew she could never take this step again. After a moment, she squared her shoulders and wandered back towards home hoping that she would get there before he woke. Maybe she could prevent him from going to look for more drink tonight.

It is clear from these stories and from comments made by participants that many of the people on welfare do not know how to cope with the rehabilitative process. They see no way out. There is an obvious need for careful, instructive counselling based on the here and now and on the immediate things that could be done to alleviate stressful and sometimes unbearable human situations. The fact that so many of the women recipients in our demonstration programme were buoyed up by the group discussions and talked about this as an important revival of their hopes and their self-esteem suggested that some methods must be devised for helping them cope with the psychological aspects of the problem along with the bread and butter aspects.

The Welfare System - Depersonalization

If we accepted going on welfare as a serious stigma attached to it, we might turn to the way that people are dealt with when they enter the welfare system to find out how they are helped to overcome these feelings. It is fair to say that one of the major criticisms coming out of our research was that the system does not assist the person to cope with these feelings of being inadequate or second-rate. As part of the confrontation procedures, the participants were asked to develop important issues or problems facing the system and people in it. In Appendix A, a complete list of the 49 problems is recorded. Later these 49 issues were ranked by the participants and the following ten topics received the highest ratings in the final ranking.

They are given in order of their importance as viewed by the participants - both social workers and recipients.

Top Ten Important Issues/Problems
According to Participants

1. Use policy as a guide, the real end is the client's needs.
2. Department has to be more human in terms of organization.
3. Social workers and Department have to learn our needs.
4. Recipient should be a person not a number.
5. Need to change to attitude of total system concern.
6. More group participation and involvement.
7. Housing should be made more suitable.
8. More policy information for social worker and recipient.
9. Create a climate conducive to dialogue.
10. Emotional development is as basic a need as food and shelter.

There appears to be three major features of the system which are alluded to in these comments.

1. A more human and less depersonalizing approach to recipients by people in the system is needed.
2. More group participation and involvement is desired.
3. More policy information for social workers and recipients would help.

The latter two points deal with upward communication within the system which includes policy making privileges or involvement with policy making wherever appropriate. They also involve downward communication to all people in the system, including the recipients and social workers, of what major decisions have been made up top. However, the major issue of depersonalization seems to be the one participants wish to change most.

The recipient clearly wants to abolish restrictive rules and formalities which set up barriers between workers and recipients. The recipients ask for a more informal approach on the part of the social workers. As one recipient mentions, "If, when the worker visits a client's home, she would share coffee with the client and not refuse when asked." Another recipient commented, "The social worker should get to know his clients and families as people, not just as a file."

Insufficient consideration of human needs often leads to the humiliation of clients. One recipient described the following incident during the social worker's visit:

A few days before I had dyed my hair blonde (it was something I had always wanted to do but never got around to). The first thing the social worker did was give me a blast for that (not because of the \$2.50 it had cost me, but because it "didn't look right.") Then, she gave me a lecture because I was next door and another because the living room was a mess, and another because she didn't approve of the jeans and halter that I was wearing. No matter what I said in defense, she kept coming back to the fact that I was not keeping up the image of a respectable woman as she saw it. When I told her that I had a right to my own life, she indicated that if I did not comply with her wishes she had the power to stop my income.

We will come back to the small procedural and legal details which tend to dehumanize the administration of welfare. The point being made here is that people

seeking welfare are, in most cases, severely handicapped by circumstances many of which are beyond their control. Because of present community pressures, they have a feeling of guilt or personal inadequacy when they make the decision to ask for welfare initially, and their life situation has placed them under severe psychological pressures. They often feel hopeless and useless. A system to function effectively, if its' goal is rehabilitation, must recognize these factors and must reach out in a human and ego building way. Attitudes, shortages of budget and poorly conceived programme objectives all prevent this from happening at the present time.

Money Giving and Counselling

The client's economic dependence on welfare and on the representative of that system, the social worker creates if not a fearful then at least, a less than frank relationship between the recipient and the worker. One recipient expressed it this way, "Whenever a worker comes to visit you, you always worry because they may cut off a few dollars for some reason." From the point of view of the recipient, it is impossible for them to express a sincere opinion if they have a constant fear of losing money when discussing their problems with the social worker. One stated it this way, "You cannot be frank and open with a worker if you feel it will endanger the budget." Other recipients mentioned, "Part of the cause of alienation is the power that the worker holds over the client."

"If we only could be sure that no matter what information we gave, it wouldn't make any difference to our cheque."

"Just in case a social worker and recipient don't get along, there should be a safeguard where your cheque is concerned."

Administrators generally, have a positive attitude towards dividing these two functions. Their reasoning for this centres around the following major issues:

"It would be more effective to have the functions divided. It is wrong to assume that all persons who require financial assistance also require social service."

"Recipients would be better motivated to use counselling services if they were not related to financial assistance."

Social workers themselves find that the function of money giving undermines the counselling process.

"The client is reluctant to become involved in counselling as a few things they may tell the worker may result in having some of their allowance cut off."

This fact has a special importance for deserted wives who are attempting to work out a satisfactory heterosexual relationship with common-law husbands and boy-friends. Undoubtedly there is a good deal of anxiety where counselling could be of benefit. But the moral overtones connected with the giving of money make a frank discussion of these problems difficult. In fact, as we will point out in a later section of this chapter, the probing questions of the social worker relating to sexual activity can be a particularly humiliating experience for women on welfare, not to mention the obliteration of any hope that in future they could use that social worker to discuss some of their heterosexual problems.

Some social workers suggested that not only should the functions of money giving and counselling be separated, but recipients should have a choice of going to the counsellor whom they find most helpful. Some social workers feel that separating the money giving function

could provide them with more time to truly counsel:

"I find that I am so involved with the money giving process, I never get around to dealing with the counselling area."

Table 5.3 summarizes the results of the questions put to the participants. Note that the majority of participants - administrators, social workers and clients are in favour of dividing these functions. We came to the same conclusion in the welfare study in British Columbia where 61% of the participants answered this question in the affirmative.

Social Work Training

Another problem which emerged during this study, was the inadequacy of social work training. All participants we questioned, concluded that there needed to be an improvement in social work training. Recipients and social workers felt that the workers should be provided with "more on-the-job" training. Many emphasized that social workers should have more personal experience. For example they said:

"Workers should live in the home of recipients while in training."

On the other hand, it is well known that social work training requires a fairly heavy commitment to field work experience at the present time. It may be that on-the-job training suggests that the roles of the social worker is prepared for in his education, are not the roles that are most needed when he gets on the job. While it is impossible to document this, there appears to be strong indication that with the present turmoil in the field of welfare administration, there is little clear statement of precisely what the goals of welfare programs are and, therefore, what the roles of social workers ought to be. Without these goals clearly defined it is impossible to set up better training programs.

Most participants, including administrators, agreed that social workers should experience some type of sensitivity training. One recipient mentioned that,

"Workers are either cool, or lack self-confidence which makes the recipient hesitate to rely on them for help."

The social workers and administrators have other more precise suggestions about how education could be improved. They asked for more specialized training relating to specialized problem areas such as marriage counselling, alcoholism, etc. Some administrators suggested that there should be courses dealing with "culture of poverty".

In the client's opinion, there is a marked divergence between the attitudes of various social workers which should be dealt with in social work education. The issue is stated in the following way:

"Attitudes created by staff difference - on the one hand, fair distribution of scarce resources on the other hand, get the most for your client."

This issue was rated higher by recipients than by either social workers or administrators. This suggests there is a difference in posture toward the role of the social worker which is keenly appreciated by many recipients. On the one hand, the worker sees himself as a functionary in a large legal system set in motion to protect people who have a right to assistance when they find themselves in an unusually difficult situations. On the other hand, there is the commitment to the client and the attempt to occasionally subvert the system in the interest of getting more for a particular client. The first attitude might be considered the role of the functionary who carries out the policy of the department. The other may be considered the role of the advocate who represents his client in the best way he can. Whether one is better than the other, or whether something completely different, or an amalgam of these two is desirable. It appears that this is a schism in the public welfare field which goes to the heart of social work practice. Young social workers should at least be aware of this difference before the end of their fieldwork.

Survival, Support or Rehabilitation

Many participants see welfare as an organization which provides the assistance for basic survival, but ignores their personal development needs. The social assistance programme is structured to maintain a standard of living that is simply existing. There is nothing to encourage improvement and economic position. As one recipient noted:

"I have asked two years in a row, if I couldn't take a correspondence course, but I was put off with the answers that my children are too young."

Other problems which limit the personal development of recipients are related to income. A woman is allowed to earn only \$20.00 a month and when an attempt is made to earn more, substantial portions of her assistance are deducted. Just how this works from a dollars and cents point of view is not as important as the fact that it is perceived as a major problem in reducing motivation for clients. One recipient points out:

"Regulations do not permit recipients to improve their positions beyond essential need and this kills the desire to try."

If the system is designed only to allow you to survive and has the effect of grinding down the motivation to improve yourself, the result is that you accept who you are and what you are and survival becomes the only major goal. As one recipient stated;

"Because you are rejected by society, you run away from it and seek sanctuary among those in the same trap as yourself."

Because the recipient feels that he cannot improve himself, since regulations discourage this, he must accept the way of life of those who are not primarily concerned with achieving a more "normal" life style.

It would be unjust to blame only the community, or the welfare system for the recipient's life style. Some recipients who are trapped on welfare are not able to work because of special personal situations. There are a large group of deserted wives and another large group which could best be described as those who are poorly educated. We asked, "Do you think the recipients would take a job when the salary is only 10% higher than their present welfare cheque?" Thirty-three percent of the recipients answered none would, but only 11% of the social workers gave this answer and none of the administrators did as seen in Table 5.4. It is interesting that the recipients themselves are not as optimistic about their fellow recipients availing themselves of a job at even a small increase in income. To put it in another way, the administrators and social workers are more convinced of the rank and file recipients wish to be independent than the recipients we questioned. The most common reason for "None would" reply was that they would lose medical coverage and have to pay additional cost such as baby sitter and transportation. Perhaps the recipients see this in a more realistic light. As the welfare system develops a complete service for medical coverage and other incidental and unusual expenses, they develop a larger schism between the recipient and the work-a-day world. One who has suffered serious disadvantages is not quick to abandon some vestige of security to attempt to "make it on his own again." All these things suggested that a graduated system of welfare payments which recognize and encourage as much individual endeavour as possible and has built in basic supports for catastrophies such as medical in medical insurance, should be encouraged. This needed if welfare programs are to be rehabilitative rather than merely giving survival support. The fallacy in survival support is that it leads to a trap of permanent welfare dependency.

Social Workers Are Alienated

One of the most surprising outcomes of this study, is that while we assumed that clients would feel alienated from society by virtue of their role as a welfare recipient, we also discovered that workers felt alienated from administrators, and indeed, from the major pressure of the welfare system. The social worker finds himself at a pressure spot in the system where on the one hand, he feels a responsibility to give direct assistance to the recipient sitting across the desk. These antagonizing forces in the social worker's position are heightened by the fact that the worker knows his employment and economic welfare is dependent on his functioning within the guidelines set down by the administration. He has relatively little contact with administrators. One of the most important issues in the set of 49 described in Appendix A, from the point of view of the social workers was, "No upward communication channels in department". Another way of saying this, which was expressed during the discussions was "Staff feel isolated" because "the communication is mainly vertical with little opportunity for horizontal contact". The process where decision making "tends to be authoritarian rather than consultative."

In general, social workers are very concerned with establishing a good rapport in communication with their clients. All issues concerning a social worker - client relationship are most important for social workers as for example:

"Create a climate conducive to dialogue."

"Use policy as a guideline, the real issue is the client's needs."

"Recognize potential value of non-conventional forms of assistance not related to the economic goals."

Administrators did not play a large part as participants in this study. They were included in the first and last sessions. However, the results obtained by ratings and

a final questionnaire opened some interesting areas which bear further investigation. The most outstanding features in the rating of the client, worker and administrator are on the following issues:

"More social workers or smaller case-loads so that more involved contact is possible."

"No upward communication channel in department."

"Social worker-client relationship better when informal."

"Emotional development is as basic a need as food and shelter."

These issues which refer to the functions of the welfare system and which keep the social worker satisfied that what he is doing is relevant and tied into the channels of communication and decision making, were rated much higher by recipients and social workers than by administrators. Administrators gave higher ratings to the following issues:

"Does client have the right to assess his problem regardless of social worker's opinion?"

"Regional director's group needs to operate as a management group rather than a group of managers."

These issues, particularly the last one, are related to organizational decisions within the Department, and undoubtedly are of more interest to administrators and social workers than recipients. The suggestion here and it is only a suggestion is that the administrators may be the major cause of social worker alienation.

Whether the cause we found that the social workers were as alienated as the recipients we talked to. Their sense of frustration and unhappiness with the role they perform

and their feeling of being outside the system, in terms of their ability to affect it, is severe. It is difficult to place the blame anywhere else but on administration in general. It was significant that in the confrontation program, people of higher status in the system seemed to be more resistant to open communication. There were notable exceptions to this, of course. There also was less commitment to confrontation programs and sensitivity training sessions on the part of administrators than on the part of rank and file workers or recipients. Perhaps they had more to lose - more status, by being exposed as ordinary human beings. It appears that people working within the system are alienated and that the way the system is conceived in terms of the definitions of its objectives, and in terms of operation which relate to policy, communication patterns and decision making procedures, are to a great extent dysfunctional. The system is dysfunctional for both client-consumer, and the person working as a functionary at lower levels - the social worker.

Some Procedures Have an Alienating Effect

Some problems involving the procedures of the welfare system emerged and should be commented on. Table 5.7 shows that 80% of the participants think there is a great need to provide recipients with more information concerning their rights and privileges.

The majority of participants feel that some welfare laws invade the recipient's personal life as shown in Table 5.6. Recipients feel that the welfare laws are unnecessarily arbitrary in terms of moral judgements.

*"Welfare does not let the recipients
have male companions."*

*"Guests staying in the home for a
week must be reported."*

One administrator pointed out to us that there was a municipality in the province that would not allow recipients to keep pets.

The procedure of issuing vouchers adds an unnecessary stigma. Not only is it unpleasant to think that welfare recipients can not take care of their affairs and, therefore must be given vouchers for specific items but also the recipients report that the vouchers are difficult to negotiate and they find it hard to bargain for the best price with vouchers.

Another complaint was that the welfare regulations allow representatives of the welfare system to make household searches without a warrant. Another type of invasion of privacy mentioned by a recipient was:

"The Department has right of access to our medical records."

She felt this was unfair. Workers contributed examples of how they felt the procedures invaded the privacy of recipients. They mentioned:

"Separated women must give sufficient information to a worker to make him feel satisfied about their relationship to a man. It is necessary to find out whether they have sexual relationships or not with a man to be able to make the difference between a boarder or a common-law husband for the purpose of allocating assistance."

Others felt that, "the accounts of spending" represent a great invasion into the privacy of the recipient.

Table 5.9 shows that 55% of the participants feel that there are not adequate procedures for recipients to appeal the decision of a social worker. In this connection, Table 5.10 gives very solid approval by the participants for the use of advisory and consultant groups. These would be made up of recipients and used by the Department of Welfare.

A number of suggestions regarding structural and office procedure were made. For example, some participants felt

there should be an improvement in waiting room facilities. One administrator gave an interesting suggestion that branch offices, in the future, should be located in shopping centres which are a natural place for people to go to.

Effects of Confrontation Discussions

In the preceding chapter it was mentioned that generally, the reaction to the confrontation experiment was positive. Incidents were reported that suggested some of the participants changed their method of communicating and relating to other people as a result of the experiment. Forty-nine issues or problems were developed by the group during the first meeting and ranked in terms of importance at the beginning and at the end of the eight half-day sessions. The summary of changes in their ranking from the beginning to the end of the seminar are shown below.

Most Important Upward Changes in Ranking of Important Issues of Social Workers and Recipients

1. More group participation and involvement. (+0.8)*
2. Need to change to attitude of total system concern. (+0.5)
3. When is the time to involve citizens committed in policy decisions? (+0.5)
4. Workers feel inadequate to cope due to pressure, and giving up outside interests, losing objectivity and focus. (+0.5)
5. No upward communication channel in departments. (+0.4)
6. Grievance committee - client, supervisor, worker, chairman. (+0.4)
7. Housing should be made more suitable. (+0.4)
8. More policy information for social worker and recipient. (+0.4)

* This indicates the average amount of change on a five-point scale from pre to post.

Most Important Downward Changes in Ranking of Important Issues

1. Meeting needs first of top management, then department and finally those of client. (-1.0)*
2. Phony atmosphere caused by regulations. (-0.8)
3. Social workers frustration leads to program manipulation. (-0.6)
4. System is creating a dependency situation. (-0.6)
5. Does client have right to assess his/her problem regardless of social worker's opinion? And what happens if this is not so? (-0.5)

In considering the upward and downward changes in ranking of important issues made by the social workers and recipients, it appears that the issues which have risen in importance are those dealing with positive and active suggestions for improving the welfare system. Those that moved downward are issues that involve statements by people who say, "It is bad, it is phony." The requests for specific information, specific programs appear to be rising. At the final session the group emphasized the importance and fruitfulness of mutual co-operation. They asked for:

- group participation and involvement,
- grievance committees represented by client,
- supervisory worker and chairman,
- more policy information for both social workers and recipients,
- an improvement in the bureaucratic system in welfare departments.

These things confirm the fact that all issues which represent only statements about a present status quo, mostly in the form of a passive criticism, lost importance in the eyes of social workers and recipients after the group confrontation. From this point of view it can be stated that the group sessions reduced individual alienation. Their positive and active approach to the solving of problems was in contradiction to the powerlessness, meaninglessness and purposelessness which are the basic dimensions of alienation.

* This indicates the average amount of change on a five-point scale from pre to post.

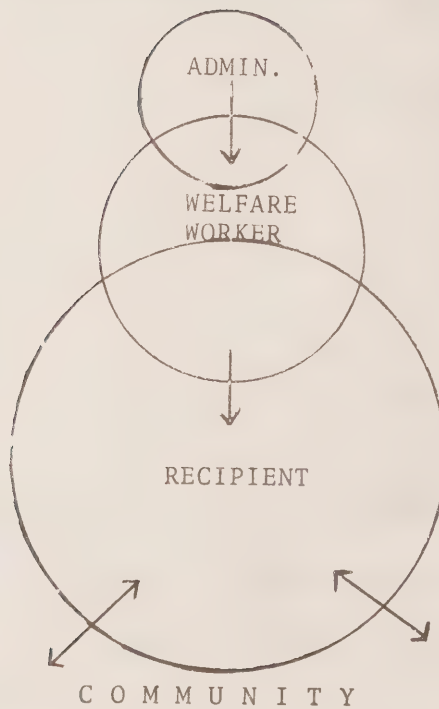


Figure 5.1: The Welfare System

TABLE 5.1

Where do you think is the basic problem area
in the whole system?

BASIC PROBLEM AREA	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
With the recipients themselves.	-	-	-	-	-
Between the recipients and social workers.	-	-	-	-	-
With the social workers themselves.	-	-	-	-	-
Between the social workers and the administration	6	-	-	6	20.5
With the administration itself and its' rules.	1	1	-	2	6.7
Social attitude which create the ideology of the system.	5	8	8	21	72.8
	—	—	—	—	—
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.2

Do you think the community thinks it is
shameful for people to be on welfare?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Most people do	6	4	4	14	48.3
Some people do	6	5	4	15	51.7
None does	-	-	-	-	-
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.3

Do you think that it would be useful to divide the money
giving and counselling into separate jobs?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Yes	6	7	5	18	62.1
No	3	1	2	6	20.5
Don't know	3	1	1	5	17.4
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.4

Do you think that recipients would take a job when the salary is only 10% higher than their present welfare cheque?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Almost all would	1	3	4	8	27.5
Some would	7	5	4	16	55.1
None would	4	1	-	5	17.4
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.5

Should we be prepared to do without "something" because we are low-income or because we are welfare recipients?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Yes	4	6	5	15	51.7
No	8	3	3	14	48.3
Don't know	-	-	-	-	-
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.6

Which of the following should the welfare recipients
be prepared to do without?

ITEMS	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL	
				N	%
Telephone	-	-	-	-	-
Pets	1	-	1	2	7.1
Liquor	2	1	3	6	21.4
Cigarettes	2	1	2	5	18.0
A car	3	3	3	9	32.2
Regular social outgoings	1	1	-	2	7.1
Personal Accessories, Cosmetics, etc.	1	1	-	2	7.1
Other	-	-	2	2	7.1
Total	10	7	11	28	100.0

Note: Person can name more than one item.

TABLE 5.7

Do you think there is a need to provide recipients with more information concerning their rights and privileges?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Great need	10	8	5	23	79.5
Fair need	2	1	3	6	20.5
No need	-	-	-	-	-
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.8

Do you think that some welfare laws invade the recipients personal life?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Yes	8	6	5	19	65.5
No	3	2	3	8	27.6
Don't know	1	1	-	2	6.9
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.9

Do you think there are adequate procedures for recipient
to appeal a social worker's decision?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Yes	6	5	5	16	55.1
No	-	4	3	7	24.4
Don't know	6	-	-	6	20.5
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

TABLE 5.10

Can recipient advisory or consultant groups
be used by department of welfare?

	CLIENT	WORKER	ADMIN- ISTRATOR	TOTAL N	%
Yes	11	9	8	28	96.6
No	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	1	-	-	1	3.4
Total	12	9	8	29	100.0

RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Separate the "Money Giving" and "Counselling" Functions

The money giving functions should be semi-automated and handled by clerical help along with a computer, using a point system. People should be asked to fill out a form very similar to an Income Tax Form, and if they have difficulty a clerical assistant should help them. The form could be quickly scored and a cheque issued. Normal control and auditing procedures could be developed in this system.

In a separate division, counselling could be offered for recipients. It may be valuable for the Welfare Department to purchase such counselling from private agencies, just as they now purchase medical services. Even if this were done the referral of clients to resources in the community for legal assistance, psychotherapy, etc. would appear to be an important counselling function.

2. "All or Nothing" Welfare System Should Be Changed

The regulation requirements that people do not work at all, should be revised so that as a person improves his ability to earn, his benefits are reduced. It would appear that such a gradual reduction in assistance would encourage recipients to try to take even part time jobs to improve themselves. It would also encourage them to experiment with different ways of providing for themselves, realizing that they weren't forfeiting support from the welfare system. This type of program would have to reward the recipient for extra work so that he got a little extra in his pocket if he did part time work rather than just stay at home and collect welfare.

3. Social Work Education Should Be Re-examined

Throughout this experiment it became increasingly apparent that social workers have been trained to repress their own feelings and their spontaneity. This is done at the expense of relating effectively with clients in many cases. The old freudian approach with the patient lying on the couch facing in the other direction and the therapist allowing free associations to come forward does not seem to be appropriate. Nor does non-directive counselling. A much more aggressive program of problem definition is needed. One is needed which recognizes that while there are emotional components to most people's problems, there are other serious practical aspects. The problem definition program should also recognize that the history of a problem may be valuable and in most cases will be valuable, but should not be dwelled upon as an excuse for inactivity. The social worker-recipient relationship must concentrate on the here and now and the recipient must be prepared to deal with today onward. The fact that social work training has been fragmented due to the involvement of community colleges and other graduate programs, suggests that the whole question of what is the function of social work in the social welfare field has not been answered. There is no question that many people on welfare need skilled and talented counsellors to help them adjust to difficult situations. This is particularly true if we are to accept a rehabilitative as opposed to a make-do type of welfare program. What is suggested here is that a careful study be mounted in the area of the training needs of people working in the welfare field, quite irrespectible of whether they have an M.S.W. or not. Once we break down the labour force needs and the task definitions, we can then go back and look at the training requirements, some of which may involve extensive postgraduate education and others which undoubtedly will not. There seems to be a place for forms design and a computer systems man as well as a freudian psychologist in the lexicon of people working in the welfare systems. Social workers need to be aware of these kinds of approaches to problem solving. They need to understand the system as a system and to use information to make decisions. The laboratory programs, such as the kind of thing we have done with this group, would be an important adjunct to typical social work training. But this should not come until there has been a careful evaluation of what is required in terms of skills to provide the necessary services to the welfare consumer.

4. Recipient Advisory or Consultant Groups

Recipient groups could be used as advisory bodies for framing welfare policy. They would be a valuable sounding board to try out new programs and obtain critiques of present operating procedures.

Recipient groups could also act as consultants in specific cases, meeting with the social workers and bringing to their attention the attitudes and living conditions in the client's area, which would allow the workers to make a more valuable diagnosis and treatment plan. Also, by working groups it is possible for the social worker to operate at a different level whereby he is a facilitator providing a vehicle for clients to discuss their mutual problems and work out their own solutions in a much healthier and less dependent way.

5. Group Counselling

The scarce resources of trained social workers could be spread out more effectively if more group counselling was undertaken. Special interest groups such as one-parent families and people with budgeting problems could be dealt with in groups of 10 or 12 rather than a one-to-one casework format. Most participants felt that groups should be led by people who have special training and that if caseworkers were to be involved in a group format they would need some re-training. They also felt that group counselling should take place on a bi-monthly basis to be effective. This implies that the majority felt a continuing type of group counselling was preferable.

6. Provide More Information Concerning the Rights and Privileges of the Recipients

It would seem a valuable way of cutting down on over-worked social workers' duties and, at the same time, increasing the prestige and esteem of the recipient, to have available in all offices well written, simple and accurate descriptions of their rights and privileges under the welfare system. It would also lead to uniformity of quality of service since the recipients would know what they can or cannot expect and would not be at the mercy of social workers who, through malice or ignorance, might shortchange them in whatever

assistance they receive. Along with this type of written information, an information centre could be set up, staffed with recipient volunteers, where people could receive information about their rights and privileges. This kind of centre could pass on to administration the most prevalent questions and, in so doing, feed back changes in community conditions and legislation for inclusion in a reprint of the brochure on rights and privileges.

7. Improve Appeal Procedures

Appeal procedures could be improved by guaranteeing a fair hearing for all persons wishing some form of redress. It is important that all recipients be apprised of the fact that such a procedure is possible. Finally, appeal procedures should be conducted at the local level so that the administrators and supervisors in the local offices are made aware of recipients' complaints and any general changes in procedures could be effected. This would guarantee the corrective nature of the negative feedback, and local officials would not react in a hostile or defensive way because of the reprimands of provincial bodies.

8. Set Up Specific Regulations About Enquiries Into Personal Life of Recipients

It is undoubtedly necessary to make some enquiries into the personal life of the recipient, but the recipient should be protected from "unnecessary nosiness." It is also important that regulations be reviewed at regular intervals to make sure that Victorian attitudes, no longer embraced by the majority of the community, are not being impressed on the recipient.

9. Examine Welfare Administrative Practices

This study has not allowed us to explore with any detail the administrative practices of the Department of Welfare. However, the surprising results that many social workers are as alienated or more alienated than recipients by the system, suggests that perhaps one of the most important areas of future investigation will have to be the administrative policies and practices within welfare departments. There is an

emerging body of management science which will permit those working the public sector to apply rigorous procedures for defining objectives and establishing criteria to measure achievement of those objectives. Along with these procedures there seems to be a notable lack of effective communication.

When meetings are held they seem to be sources of frustration. People apparently are not aware of their area of responsibility or how their performance is being judged. The welfare system is under severe scrutiny at the present time by not only enlightened social workers but by members of the legislature and a vocal liberal group among the populace. While this program was not directed at answering the question for welfare departments, "What are we doing?", it appears that a series of group discussions running from the lowest level of clerical staff to senior administrators, should be undertaken to identify the major issues and to begin to develop a model. Then a series of programs could be designed which would be embraced by everyone in the system and which could be worked towards in measurable steps. A study of this type would reveal precisely where welfare administrators need training and assistance in improving their management skills. Expenditures in terms of costs and the administrator's time, could be justified in terms of improved efficiency and morale as well as the increase in rehabilitative cases on welfare rolls.

10. Communication Not More Money May Be The Answer

The participants consistently reported examples of poor communication between each level within the welfare system. This included communication between the Department itself and the community at large. The recipient's problems often are best described in terms of their inability to communicate their anxieties or their wishes to other people. In some cases, even to themselves. Within the Department some called for more downward communication to tell them what is going on. Others suggested that there should be greater upward communication, so those at the higher levels can understand the problems of those at the bottom. Another group suggested there is not enough lateral communication within the Department. When asked about their procedures, social workers are quick to reply that they spend a great deal of time either at meetings or filling out forms which they feel are irrelevant to their basic functions. The recipients say that their major problem

is that people in the community do not understand them. A fascinating proposition is that perhaps a clearing up of communication barriers and backlogs would do a great deal to make the system much more efficient. Thus, improved communication may result in a reduction in the need for ever escalating budgets to solve our welfare problems. At the present time, it appears that a great deal of money is being spend in terms of staff time, on communication which is less than optimal from a functional point of view. At the same time, there seems to be a real need for communication of information which people do not have. For example, welfare recipients do not know what their rights are and what regulations really say. It would benefit the senior official in most welfare departments to assign one of their most able staff to exploring ways to alleviate the communication problems in all channels and in all directions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

CHAPTER 7

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

From this exploratory study, flows several interesting hypotheses which appear to have promise as a basis for future research activity.

1. Separation of "Money-Giving" and "Counselling" Functions

We would suggest a project where the provision of financial assistance to recipients would be separated from the counselling. For a pilot study, one office could provide a money-giving function on an income supplement scale basis so that there would not be the artificial distinction between "being on" and "being off" welfare. As the recipients earned more, the amount of assistance would become less - very much like a reverse income tax. The recipient would be encouraged to fill out his own form and would have clerical assistance only in completing the form. These forms could be adjudicated either by a computer or by a clerk following fairly simple rules. Such rules would be clearly posted for the recipients, either in brochures or advertisements. Normal auditing and control procedures would be set in place to prevent people obtaining funds under fraudulent conditions.

Quite apart from the money-giving function there would be a counselling service where social workers would use both group and individual counselling to satisfy the requests of clients. Clients would make appointments with workers, very much as with a mental health clinic or private therapist. The major objective here would be to help the client adjust to the problems facing him and achieve some solution to his personal problems which would help him to better satisfy his life goals and presumably, eventually overcome his need for welfare assistance. The counselling would be done in confidence and the information obtained by the social worker would not be used to adjudicate the recipient's request for funds.

It would be important to explore such a program for one year to assess the costs, the effectiveness of the program and the reactions of the personnel as well as the recipients. We would predict that there would be much more remedial work done and that the alienating forces at work in the present welfare system would be reduced. To accomplish this a control office which would conduct their program as usual, would be needed and a careful follow-up required. On the other hand, it would be important to find out whether social workers feel that by having their money-giving function taken away, they are handicapped in dealing with their welfare recipients from a rehabilitative standpoint. This experiment would also develop an excellent opportunity to see what the perceived needs of the recipient are for counselling and assistance of a psychological or casework nature.

2. A Department Wide Study of Purposes, Objectives and Goals

By involving groups at all levels in the Department of Welfare, from the clerical staff through to senior administrative officials, in group discussions which are developed around predetermined structures it would be possible to examine the objectives of the Department. Specific subjects which should be considered include the needs of present day society as well as the personal objectives of the people in the Department. There is evidence of a marked disharmony between personal objectives and departmental objectives and indication of a good deal of confusion about the purposes of the Department itself. Once the purpose of the Department and the objectives of the programs, and of the individuals in the Department have been identified, it would be possible to go on to develop measurable goals. Work groups, such as welfare offices or functional groups at Head Office level, could set goals for themselves and could measure these in terms of their achievement within a specific time period. This undoubtedly would have important repercussions on administrative practices within the Department. In fact, might threaten certain people who would find their roles remarkably changed and in some cases their positions eliminated. Groups of recipients should be involved in this type of re-examination to ensure that the consumer groups' needs are consistent with the objectives as they are framed for the Department.

Until an exploration of this type has been concluded, it is difficult to believe anything but a patchup job of public administration can carry on. It is assumed that such a careful, detailed, self-examination would take approximately two years to complete, but the benefits of such an activity would begin to show within the first two or three months. Certainly it would have an effect on morale and on the attitude of some of the more junior and perhaps most capable professionals within the Department. A study of this type would have major beneficial effects within the province. It could have national importance in that the welfare programs and the major challenges facing those in Welfare Departments across Canada. For such a program to be undertaken in one province would undoubtedly provide a contribution to clear thinking about the function of welfare in all ten.

3. Improvement of Present Laboratory Program for Use in Staff Development on a Provincial Basis

Because of the extremely positive reaction to the program presented in Winnipeg, we suggest that the most favourably received aspects should be developed and "packaged" by the Federal Government for use in staff development at the provincial level. The delivery of welfare services could be enhanced by providing staff training and developing tools for trainers wishing to improve the sensitivity and skill of their services.

In addition to this type of program development, workshops should be sponsored by the Federal Government for trainers who would use these tools. This would include not only welfare workers but case aids drawn from recipient groups, and people from the ranks of welfare offices (such as stenographers and clerks) who have excellent human skills. There is a great pool of untapped human resources in Manitoba (and no doubt in other provinces) which could be utilized at all levels to improve and humanize the delivery of welfare services. The Federal Government could provide an important addition to the provision of welfare by training leaders and developing tools, thereby reducing alienating forces which have been at work and are demonstrated in this study.

4. Task Evaluation in the Welfare Department Leading to Recommendations for Social Work Education

Social work education would benefit from a careful examination of what is done and should be done in the Welfare Department. This would involve consideration of such topics as automating certain kinds of record keeping and payment of certain types of program benefits. Questions regarding paper flow and forms design need to be explored. A general description of just what a social worker does most of his time and how effective he is needs to be explored. What is being recommended is a study of welfare behaviour in which we observe and describe just what people do in the system and how effective these different activities are. Once this description has been developed a model could be built to devise the most efficient way of carrying out these activities. The skills required by the human elements in the model then must be developed either through in-service training or, through prior education at the secondary, university or postgraduate level. Such a study should include a manpower forecast suggesting where various types of personnel will be in demand and where the demand will be reduced. The health and education sectors of the community and private welfare bodies should be part of such a project. The major objective should be to provide those charged with the development of up-to-date curriculum in the schools of social work with data upon which to base their decisions to offer various types of courses and other learning experiences.

It has been suggested in this study that more on-the-job training should occur and yet social work has probably more applied types of programs than other professional educational programs. It is not just being "on-the-job" but the type of experience and the sequence of experiences which occur in an applied setting which are important. By examining the activities and exploring how these skills might be developed, not only schools training workers but also, personnel concerned with in-service training and administrators could benefit.

APPENDIX A

IMPORTANT ISSUES (PROBLEMS)
FACING THE WELFARE SYSTEM

1. Use policy as a guide, the real end is the client's needs.
2. Department has to be more human in terms of organization.
3. Social workers and Department have to learn clients' needs.
4. Recipient should be treated as a person not just another number.
5. Need to change to attitude of total system concern.
6. More group participation and involvement.
7. Housing should be made more suitable.
8. More policy information for social worker and recipient.
9. Create a climate conducive to dialogue.
10. Emotional development is as basic a need as food and shelter.
11. An attitude of worker to ask client and act on feedback.
12. Planned change relative to needs, relative to objective.
13. Method of implementing change.
14. Revise program yearly reflecting change in cost of living.
15. Regional Directors' groups need to operate as a management group rather than as a group of managers.
16. How honest can client be with social worker?
17. More citizen participation in Department.
18. Does client have right to assess his/her problem regardless of social worker's opinion?

19. Role of politician versus role of administrator needs clarification.
20. Implementation of political decisions without consultation of meaningful and appropriate nature.
21. No upward communication channel in Departments.
22. Consistency of service and interpretation of rules across the province.
23. Recognize potential value of non-conventional forms of assistance not related to economic goal.
24. Grievance committee - client, supervisor, worker and chairman.
25. Evolution of change - rather than throw out baby with bath water.
26. An attitude of exploration versus attitude of resignation.
27. More caseload management - more case orientation.
28. Recipient be case aid - not work for welfare.
29. Workers feel inadequate to cope due to pressure, and giving up outside interests, losing objectivity and focus.
30. Social worker-client relationship better when informal.
31. No process for testing policies, procedures or facilitating above.
32. Every regional office needs functional citizen's advisory group.
33. When is the time to involve citizen's committee in policy decisions?
34. Agency inconsistencies among policies - client services in the same office not consistent.
35. System is creating a dependency situation.
36. More social workers or smaller loads so that more involved contact is possible.
37. Need for program for mothers whose children have all left home.

38. Social workers are caught in the middle between policy and clients' needs.
39. Attitude of dealing in less secretive manner with client.
40. Reluctance or resistance to change (not change for change's sake).
41. Social worker's frustration leads to program manipulation.
42. How honest, trusting and sharing can you be with client?
43. Attitudes of accountability.
44. Attitudes created by staff differences - on one hand, fair distribution of scarce resources; on the other, get the most for the client.
45. Recipient has something to lose, worker does not.
46. Phony atmosphere caused by regulations.
47. What is expected of us as civil servants?
48. Department oriented to "getting the cheques out" and nothing more.
49. Meeting needs of top management first. Then, Department and finally, those of client.

